LOST IN TRANSLATION: THE IMPORTANCE OF RETAINING ARMY SOCIOCULTURAL CAPABILITIES IN AN ERA OF PERSISTENT CONFLICT

A Monograph

by

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This monograph examines U.S. Army efforts to build a culturally competent tactical force as well as address the capabilities provided by the Human Terrain System, its primary means of providing sociocultural research and analysis in support of decision-making to tactical and operational units. This monograph finds that the U.S. Army must preserve its sociocultural capabilities and reassess its approach to how it will meet emerging requirements in the post-Operation Enduring Freedom environment. Additionally, the Army must not simply pay lip service to the importance of cultural knowledge, it has to ensure the capability is properly resourced and articulated to policymakers given the likelihood of operating in a fiscally constrained, increasingly complex future operating environment.

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ABSTRACT

LOST IN TRANSLATION: THE IMPORTANCE OF RETAINING ARMY SOCIOCULTURAL CAPABILITIES IN AN ERA OF PERSISTENT CONFLICT, by MAJ Brian A. Sansom, US Army, 79 pages.

The U.S. Army continues to struggle with developing an enduring means of providing commanders and staffs with operationally relevant, sociocultural knowledge that enhances a unit's understanding of the operational environment. Military history provides numerous examples of how the U.S. military habitually neglects to realize the importance of sociocultural factors at the outset of a conflict, particularly those of an irregular nature. Then, after operating at a disadvantage, it develops a means to bridge the gap, only to quickly abandon it once the conflict is over. Sadly, the Army is on track to repeat this trend once again.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACRONYMS vi

ILLUSTRATIONS viii

INTRODUCTION 1

The Problem 3

SECTION ONE 6

Cultural Competence and Language Training 6
Culture Defined 13
Human Terrain and Sociocultural Knowledge 17

SECTION TWO 20

Historical Sociocultural Innovation in Military Operations 20
Allied Occupation of Japan 1945-1952 24
Background and Context 24
Lost in Translation? 26
U.S. Objectives in Post-War Japan 28
Key Parties or So They Thought 30
Unfamiliar Territory 33
Sociocultural Research and Analysis during the Occupation 34
Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division 43
Assessment 48

SECTION THREE 50

The Human Terrain System 50
Background and Context 50
Organization and Capabilities 56
Assessment 63

CONCLUSIONS 66

Future Operating Environment 66
Regionally Aligned Forces 69
Conclusion 71

BIBLIOGRAPHY 72

ACRONYMS

ACFLS	Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy
ADP	Army doctrine publication
ADRP	Army doctrine reference publication
AOR	area of responsibility
ARI	Army Research Institute
BOLC	Basic Officer Leader Course
CAOCL	Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning
CARL	Combined Arms Research Library
CENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
CFLA	culture and foreign language advisor
CGSC	U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
CIE	Civil Information and Education
CKC	Culture Knowledge Consortium
COIN	counterinsurgency
CONUS	continental United States
COP	common operating picture
DAC	Department of the Army Civilian
DOD	Department of Defense
DSB	Defense Science Board
FOB	forward operating base
GPF	general purpose forces
HTAT	Human Terrain Analysis Team
HTS	Human Terrain System
HTT	Human Terrain Team
IED	improvised explosive device
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force

JIEDDO	Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization
JUONS	Joint Operational Needs Statement
LSK	Language Survival Kit
LTD	Language Training Detachment
NSS	National Security Strategy
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
ONS	Operational Needs Statement
PME	Professional Military Education
POSR	Public Opinion and Sociological Research
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
RRC	Reachback Research Center
SCAP	Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers
SSRA	Social Science Research and Analysis
TCE	Theater Coordination Element
TRADOC	U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command
USAF	United States Air Force
USARAF	United States Army Africa
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USMA	United States Military Academy

ILLUSTRATIONS

Page

Figure 1. Army Culture and Foreign Language Enterprise..... 11

Figure 2. Occupation Governing Bodies..... 32

Figure 3. SCAP General Headquarters Staff Organization 1948 (Modified by author)..... 36

Figure 4. Human Terrain System Organization (Modified by author) 55

INTRODUCTION

> The future is not one of major battles and engagements fought by armies on battlefields devoid of population; instead, the course of conflict will be decided by forces operating among the people of the world. Here, the margin of victory will be measured in far different terms than the wars of our past. The allegiance, trust, and confidence of populations will be the final arbiters of success.[1]
>
> —Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell IV, *Afghan Culture Newsletter 10*-64

In 2008, the soldiers of Charlie Company found themselves facing increasingly heavy rocket attacks from the Taliban, who would cross over the border from Pakistan to launch their barrages from near a small Afghan village called Mangritay. The commander dispatched a platoon to the village to speak to the local elders about the attacks. As usual, the Americans found the town deserted, the villages finding themselves essentially stuck between the Taliban and American forces. When a local elder finally appeared, the patrol leader asked through a translator about the level of security in the area. The man replied that, "there is no security here, we've yet to see any security around here," which was then inexplicably translated to, "We are fine; there are no problems here." The conversation continued, but unknown to the team leader, the translator repeatedly injected his own interpretation into everything. When the elder clearly indicated he would like to cooperate, even pointing toward the ridgeline the Taliban fighters were likely coming from, the translator failed to convey these answers. Finally, the old Afghan offered the American soldier a parable as explanation for why it is difficult for Afghans to cooperate with the Americans; "In our country, we grow wheat and we have ants. There is no way we can stop the little ants from stealing the wheat, there are so many…The Taliban are like little ants." He

[1]Center for Army Lessons Learned, Newsletter 10-64, *Afghan Culture* (Fort Leavenworth: Center for Army Lessons Learned, 2010), 3.

went on to explain that he understood that the Americans would do more to help his people if they cooperated, and that they wanted to help, however, the Taliban would be there long after the Americans left and would kill them for doing so. After this lengthy monologue, the only information the translator passed to the team leader was that "the Taliban are behind this mountain and was last seen a year ago." Unsatisfied with this response, the team leader left the village swearing and angry. As they walked away, the translator remarks, "I hate these people," and the platoon began its trek back to its forward operating base (FOB). A week later, more rockets were launched from the same area.[2]

This vignette is based on an actual event that took place during the Consolidation II campaign in Afghanistan from 1 October 2006 to 30 November 2009. It is but one example of how a lack of language training leaves American Soldiers subject to the skills of the translator, while a lack of cultural understanding suggests the team leader might not have understood the parable even if it had been translated correctly. In no way an isolated incident, this tactical-level illustration serves to show what became apparent to the U.S. Army as it continued to operate in an environment that required constant engagement of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds to achieved desired effects. Additionally, the vignette highlights the Army's realization that it needed an efficient and effective means of acquiring and disseminating relevant cultural and social knowledge along with language capability across the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of its organization. The limited and often oversimplified culture and language training conducted just before deployment was simply not enough. Consequently, a number of

[2]John D. McHugh, "Afghanistan: Lost in translation," *The Guardian News Website*, online video clip, http://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2008/jun/11/afghanistan.johndmchugh (accessed 17 September 2013).

organizations existed within the Army that designed and ran programs with a cultural knowledge focus, however these programs were dispersed, underfunded, and not easily accessible to commanders and their staffs.[3] Since 2007, the Department of Defense has implemented various strategies to increase cultural understanding across the services. The Army, in particular, has made great strides with integrating culture and language programs across the force, in addition to consolidating and/or creating new organizations that focus on specific challenges discussed later in this monograph.

The Problem

The U.S. Army continues to struggle with developing an enduring means of providing military decision makers with operationally relevant, sociocultural knowledge that enhances a unit's effectiveness and their understanding of the operational environment. This concept set is not new; in fact, military history provides numerous examples of how the U.S. military habitually neglects to realize the importance of sociocultural factors at the outset of a conflict, particularly those of an irregular nature. Then, after operating at a disadvantage, develops a means to bridge the gap, usually at a high cost, only to quickly abandon it once the conflict is over. Sadly, the Army is on track to repeat this trend once again.

The need for sociocultural research and analysis that supports decision-making in both combat and peacetime operations will become even more critical given the complex and uncertain future operating environment. With the likelihood of operating in an era of persistent conflict among diverse populations, and substantial budget cuts on the horizon, the U.S. Army

[3]Montgomery McFate and Andrea Jackson, "An Organizational Solution for DOD's Cultural Knowledge Needs," *Military Review* (July-August 2005): 18.

must articulate its sociocultural needs to policymakers in order to preserve its existing capabilities.[4] Likewise, the Army must not simply pay lip service to the importance of cultural knowledge; it must reassess its approach to how it will meet emerging requirements in support of Army initiatives such as the regionally aligned force concept, as well as ensure the capability is resourced appropriately. The current practice of deploying contractors and civilian social science experts as teams attached to combat units, so that they can provide accurate human terrain knowledge to commanders and their staffs, may not be the most effective or feasible method within the post-Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) environment. The military and social science disciplines, especially anthropology, share a long history whose relationship is important and well documented, but also filled with controversy. However, the ethical debate surrounding the use of social science in support of military operations is beyond the scope of this monograph, which will not include a significant discussion on the matter in an effort to remain more operationally focused.

This monograph is more cautionary than prescriptive and seeks to continue the dialogue on how best to preserve and evolve U.S. Army sociocultural capabilities to meet emerging post-Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) requirements that facilitate understanding the future security environment. It centers on the U.S. Army Human Terrain System (HTS), whose mission is to utilize its social science-based research and analysis capability to support operationally relevant decision-making and sociocultural understanding across the operational environment. Do potential gaps exist between current HTS capabilities and the future operational requirements

[4]U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-7-01, *The U.S. Army Study of the Human Dimension in the Future 2015-2024* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2008), 10.

generated by changes in U.S. strategy? If so, what adjustments need to be made to the way HTS or its potential successors are organized and/or operated in order to conform to impending force structure changes and budgetary constraints, while maintaining its critical capabilities and capitalizing on lessons learned?

In order to answer these questions, it is important to review current U.S. Army efforts to improve the cultural competence and language skills of the force, as well as definitions of key terms and concepts used throughout this study (culture, human domain, and human terrain). The first section concludes with a discussion on the meaning and role of sociocultural knowledge in order to develop a common understanding and provide context for the remainder of the paper. With an established framework for understanding current efforts, the study then examines the historical relevance of sociocultural knowledge integrated with military operations. Primarily a historical review, this section looks at the U.S. Army's use of social science research while executing military operations during the Allied Occupation of Japan 1945-1952. The case study shows how the Army recognized the importance of operationally relevant cultural information and developed an organization to meet its need at the time, only to discard it after the war ended without institutionalizing the capability for future conflict. Next, the study describes the operational requirements that drove the creation of the U.S. Army's present HTS capabilities and explores how HTS currently fulfills those requirements. This research examines current established practices and shows the degree to which HTS capabilities are addressing current needs at the operational level, while also identifying capability gaps in the current system. The detailed look at HTS concludes with an overview of the challenges surrounding the military's practices from advocates and detractors of the use of social science in support of military operations. Finally, the study concludes by considering the future environment and potential implications for HTS capabilities. This portion of the monograph will attempt to ascertain

whether existing Army cultural capabilities adequately address the emergence of new sociocultural requirements fueled by dynamic global changes and a shift in U.S. strategic focus away from a predominance of operations in Afghanistan to regionally aligned forces and the shaping of the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region.

SECTION ONE

Cultural Competence and Language Training

The U.S. Army has made progress with its efforts to train and educate a more culturally astute conventional force. There has been some improvement over the past decade, especially when considering the potential strategic consequences of a Soldier's tactical actions in cross-cultural environments like Iraq and Afghanistan. However, it is important to differentiate between the Army's efforts to build a culturally competent tactical force and how the Army provides commanders with operationally relevant sociocultural knowledge to aid in operational decisionmaking. Both topics are interrelated and must be discussed to provide a holistic view of the Army's approach to cultural matters, but this study focuses primarily on the latter, showing why the Army must maintain this operational capability in the face of uncertainty despite the impending U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

After operational experiences in Somalia and the Balkans, followed by Iraq and Afghanistan, the Department of Defense (DOD) realized the importance of understanding the sociocultural characteristics of the populace in which its forces would invariably have to operate. Mission success depended on how well Soldiers and leaders interacted and influenced people from diverse regions and cultures. With that realization, came the identification of cultural

training and capability gaps that generated a shift towards inculcating culture into military training, education, and operational planning.[5] Lessons learned continued to confirm that the Army as a whole still did not understand the utility of considering culture when planning and executing operations in Iraq or Afghanistan. Commanders found themselves embroiled in counterinsurgency operations, making little progress using conventional methods. Moreover, the Army acknowledged the need to increase the foreign language capabilities of its formations or risk limiting their effectiveness by not meeting the needs of the geographic combatant commanders. Thus, a large-scale resurgence in cultural training took place across all the services after 11 September 2001. The Army sought to identify what its troops needed to understand about culture, as well as determine the relationship between language proficiency and cultural understanding.[6]

In 2005, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Culture Center was established with the mission of "providing mission-focused culture education and training to soldiers and Department of the Army (DA) Civilians in order to build and sustain an Army with the right blend of cultural competency capabilities to facilitate a wide range of operations, now and in the future."[7] Its core mission eventually evolved to "training and educating soldiers, DA

[5]Office of the Secretary of Defense, Report to Congress on the Implementation of DoD.Directive 3000.05, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2007), 18-21.

[6]Allison Abbe, "Building Cultural Capability for Full-Spectrum Operations," (Final Study Report, U.S. Army Research Institute for Behavioral and Social Sciences, January 2008), 2.

[7]United States Army Combined Arms Center, "TRADOC Culture Center," http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/CGSC/tcc/ (accessed 28 October 2013).

Army civilians and the joint force on relevant, mission-focused, operational and Professional Military Education (PME) focused cross-cultural knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes to produce a "cross-culturally competent operational force" in recognition of the ever expanding global mission of the U.S. Army.[8] The Culture Center was one of the U.S. Army's first significant long-term efforts to remedy its cultural shortcomings. Designed to meet the needs of deploying units, the Center produces cultural training material and conducts onsite training that encompasses a growing number of countries as new requirements are identified. In addition to providing training to deploying units, the Army charged the culture center with developing curriculum in the form of Regional Training Support Packages and customized materials that could be integrated into professional military education programs.

In 2008, the Department of Defense (DOD) published an updated U.S. National Defense Strategy further shaping the Army's strategic goals. America's desire to establish partnerships and execute multinational operations was clear throughout the document. Additionally, five of the nine essential tasks laid out in the strategy focused on creating opportunities and complementing the traditional emphasis on meeting threats to U.S. interests.[9] Accordingly, the Army set out to ensure its capabilities addressed the emerging opportunities identified and designated language proficiency and understanding foreign culture critical to national security competencies.[10] *Human*

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[8]Sterilla A. Smith, "Army Culture and Foreign Language Program," *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin* (January-March 2012): 3.

[9]Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, June 2008).

[10]Department of the Army, *Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1 December 2009), 2-3.

terrain became the new key terrain, and the Army established the goal to build and sustain a blend of culture and foreign language capabilities across its force to facilitate full spectrum operations (now known as unified land operations).

As the Army's lead for culture and foreign language training, TRADOC developed the Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy (ACFLS) in 2009.[11] This strategy established a baseline capability for general-purpose forces (GPF) in response to the Army's recognition of the limitations of its cultural and language resources at the time. The ACFLS identified two key elements of its limitations as "inadequate understanding of how culture considerations influence the planning and execution of operations" and "insufficient foreign language capability across the Army, which limits the effectiveness of both units and individual leaders and soldiers."[12] Given the dynamic operational environment, the Army needed a means in which to increase its leaders' and Soldiers' cultural competence with the expectation that it would serve as an underpinning to the other competencies required of a joint, interagency, or multinational force.

The ACFLS provides for a set of initiatives designed to enhance Soldier capabilities in understanding foreign culture and language by incorporating operational experiences as well as through self-development and professional military education (PME).[13] The Army initiated several programs to meet the goals of the ACFLS. According to the 2012 Army Posture Statement, the Army has incorporated cultural lessons into Basic Officer Leadership Courses (BOLC) at the U.S. Military Academy (USMA) and Reserve Officers' Training Corps programs.

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[11]Ibid., 1.

[12]Ibid., ii.

[13]Smith, "Army Culture and Foreign Language Program," 3.

Additionally, all USMA cadets receive at least two semesters of foreign language training, while U.S. Army Cadet Command developed a Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency (CULP) program that sends hundreds of ROTC cadets overseas each year for cultural and language immersion in support of Army Security Cooperation objectives within partner nations.[14]

In addition to the pre-commissioning programs, the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center was made responsible for implementing the ACFLS within its organizations in 2011, creating the ACFL enterprise, shown in Figure 1 below.[15] Key to this implementation was the culture and foreign language advisors (CFLA) resident at each of its centers of excellence (CoE) and other Army institutions providing professional military education. The advisors were preferably social or behavioral science Ph.Ds. with teaching and operational military experience responsible for "integrating culture and foreign language training into the existing PME courses" by working to infuse culturally oriented emphasis into the curriculum. [16]

Another, another TRADOC organization, the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC), served the crucial role of providing culturally based language education across the Department of Defense. In response to the new strategy, DLIFLC expanded its role in providing language familiarization training to deploying units. It created products such

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[14]Department of the Army, "Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy (ACFLS*),*" 2012 Army Posture Statement, https://secureweb2.hqda.pentagon.mil/VDAS_ ArmyPostureStatement/ 2012/InformationPapers/ViewPaper.aspx?id=305 (accessed August 17, 2013).

[15]Smith, "Army Culture and Foreign Language Program," 3.

[16]U.S. Army, "Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy," *U.S. Army STAND-TO* Edition (6 December 2011), http://www.army.mil/standto/archive/issue.php?issue=2011-12-06 (accessed 19 November 2013).

as “HeadStart2”, an 80-100 hour self-study language package available in eleven languages and downloadable via the DLIFLC.edu website, as well as customizable Language Survival Kits (LSK) consisting of pamphlets and CDs in support of general purpose forces. Lastly, DLIFLC established 13 language training detachments (LTD) at major Army installations, where instructors teach language sustainment and enhancement courses based on the needs of the units.[17]

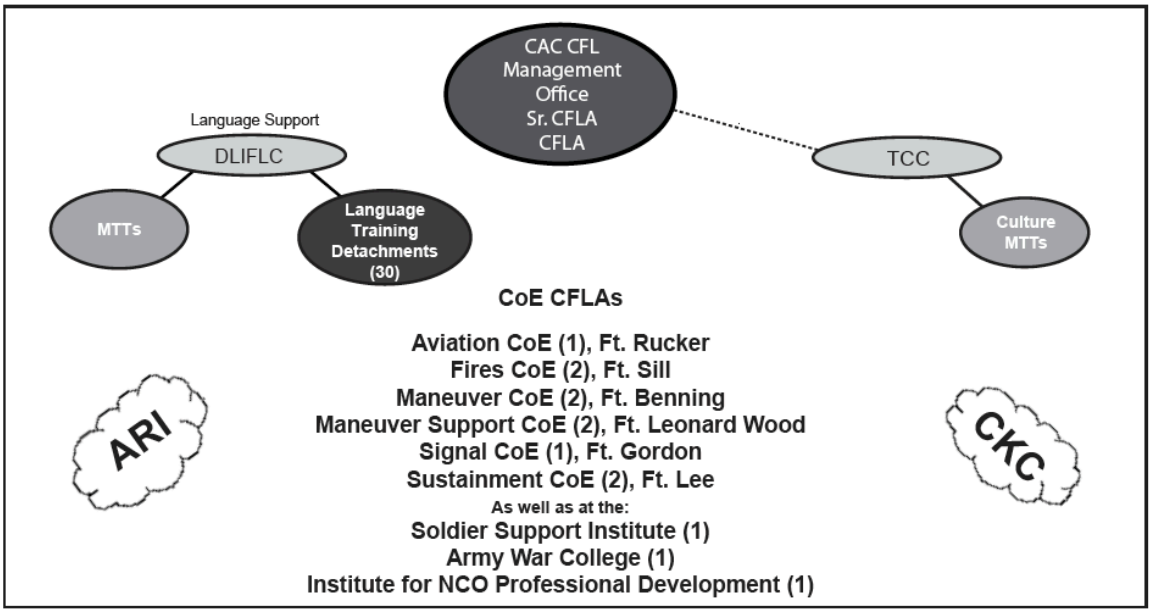

Figure 1. Army Culture and Foreign Language Enterprise

Source: Sterilla A. Smith “Army Culture and Foreign Language Program,” *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin* (January-March 2012): 3.

[17]Defense Language Institute, “About Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC),” Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, http://www.dliflc.edu/about.html (accessed 19 November 2013).

Two organizations that assisted in the implementation of the ACFL enterprise shown in the Figure 1 above are the Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) and the Culture Knowledge Consortium (CKC). ARI, under the direction of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 (HQDA) conducts Soldier-oriented research and scientific assessments to investigate or inform on a multitude of high impact Army issues.[18] The CKC is a joint and interagency effort between the U.S. Government and DOD created to facilitate interaction with military, non-governmental organizations, private, and academic institutions that conduct sociocultural research.[19] The benefit of this organization is the collaborative environment it fosters allowing it to support the Army and other military decision-makers, while sharing knowledge throughout the sociocultural community.

Although not fully implemented at the time of this writing, the Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy serves as proof of at least a start at institutionalizing culture education and language in the Army. The various aspects of cultural competence are certainly important for the future success of the Army in both war and peacetime.[20] However, the organizations and programs implemented thus far have addressed only the tactical portion of the Army's required capability. Baseline cultural and language education and training for Army Soldiers and leaders are not enough in the complex operating environment. Given the complexity of the ethnographic,

[18]U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, "Army Research Institute History," http://www.dliflc.edu/about.html (accessed 19 November 2013).

[19]Cultural Knowledge Consortium, "Cultural Knowledge Consortium," https://ckc.army.mil/Pages/default.aspx (accessed 19 November 2013).

[20]Allison Abbe, "Cross-Cultural Competence in Army Leaders: A Conceptual and Empirical Foundation" (Study Report, U.S. Army Research Institute for Behavioral and Social Sciences, October 2007), 2.

demographic, and affiliation variables in any society, the Army found that its commanders required another kind of cultural capability following the Army's initial few years in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Culture Defined

> It is said that if you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.
>
> — Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

One of the primary challenges of examining culture is determining its definition. Not only is it difficult to define, a wide variance of definitions exist depending on how it is used and by whom. Broadly, culture is defined as "the beliefs customs, arts, etc.… of a particular society, group, place that has its own way of thinking."[21] Anthropologist Clifford Geertz, a cultural anthropologist provides a more academic definition of culture from a social science perspective as "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which people communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life."[22] His view of culture provides a frame of reference to understand reality and what drives a group's behavior by diverting the focus from their actions, and placing the emphasis on the outcome of the actions.[23] This is important as

[21]Merriam-Webster Dictionary, s.v. "Culture," http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture (accessed 29 November 2013).

[22]Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 89.

[23]Ibid., 15.

it gives an observer something tangible to consider instead of an unobservable belief system and serves as the impetus from which the services began to operationalize culture[24]

Further distorting the understanding of culture in the military is the fact that a common definition across the Department of Defense does not exist. In fact, there are multiple definitions of culture in use by military organizations since each armed service has put forth its own, or in some cases multiple definitions of culture. For example, the Army's counterinsurgency manual Field Manual 3-24,[25] describes culture as a "web of meaning shared by members of a particular society or group within a society."[26] Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 5-0 defines culture as "shared beliefs, values, norms, customs, behaviors and artifacts members of a society use to cope with the world and each other."[27] Nonetheless, what has been published served as a starting point in helping the Army create doctrine that would allow its forces to operate more effectively in irregular warfare.

The U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) takes more of an operational approach to the understanding of culture. In its training book titled, *Operational Culture for the Warfighter*, culture is defined as "the shared world view and social structures of a group of people that

[24]Barak A. Salmoni and Paula A. Holmes-Eber, *Operational Culture for the Warfighter: Principles and Applications*, 2nd ed. (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps University Press, 2011), 38.

[25]Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2007), 3-6.

[26]Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 5.

[27]Department of the Army, Army Doctrine and Training Publication (ADRP) 5-0, *The Planning Process* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 1–9.

influence a persons and a group's actions and choice.[28] The USMC further limits its definition of culture to that which is "operationally relevant" considering "only those elements relevant to military missions" based on requirements established by the Marine Corps' Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL), which has the mission to "ensure Marines are equipped with requisite regional, culture, and language knowledge to allow them to plan and operate successfully in the joint expeditionary environment…"[29] The CAOCL is the USMC proponent for executing operationally focused training and education, and conducting rigorous, peer-reviewed language and cultural research in support of Marine Corps missions and requirements and is roughly equivalent to the U.S. Army's TRADOC Culture Center.[30]

The U.S. Air Force (USAF) similarly defines culture in a pragmatic manner, describing it as "the creation, maintenance, and transformation of meaning, sense making, affiliation, action, and organization by groups.[31] Like the other services, the Air Force created a dedicated Culture and Language Center in response to DODs reinvigorated call that culture matters. The center also

[28]Samoni and Holmes-Eber, *Operational Culture for the Warfighter: Principles and Applications,* 36.

[29]Jeff Watson. "Language and Culture Training: Separate Paths," *Military Review* (March-April 2010): 94.

[30]U.S. Marine Corps, "Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL)," Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning, https://www.tecom.usmc.mil/caocl/SitePages/Home.aspx (accessed 24 November 2013).

[31]Watson, "Language and Culture Training: Separate Paths," 95.

operationalizes culture in a way that allows airmen to apply general culture learning effectively in specific cultural contexts.[32]

For the purposes of this study, the TRADOC Culture Center definition of culture is used. TRADOC defines culture as a, "dynamic social system," containing the values, beliefs, behaviors, and norms of a "specific group, organization, society or other collectivity" learned, shared, internalized, and changeable by all members of the society.[33] However, broad and disparate definitions are simply not good enough for the challenges American military forces face; the armed services must work towards a common definition for future success. Because military activity takes place in multicultural contexts, having a framework is important in the interpretation of any culture. Absent a framework, it is likely that the view of indigenous activities, foreign points of view, and unfamiliar organization will be interpreted in an ethnocentric manner, in which the observer will apply its own values and biases.[34] All three services have developed frameworks and methodologies that address what warfighters need to know about culture. Doing so informs the decisionmaking process and improves the understanding of a complex operational environment. The Marine Corps does this through operational culture, the Air Force with its cross-cultural competence program, and the Army through the analysis of human terrain using sociocultural knowledge, each of which capitalize on

[32]Elizabeth Redden, "Toward a 'Cross-Culturally Competent' Air Force," *Inside Higher Ed* (9 January 2009), http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/01/09/air (accessed 24 November 2013).

[33]U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Culture Center, *Culture Education and Training Strategy for the U.S. Army* (Fort Huachuca, AZ: U.S. Army Intelligence Center, 2007).

[34]University of Foreign Military and Cultural Studies, *Red Team Member Course Advance Book* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Red Team Member Course, April-June 2013), 28.

multi-disciplinary expertise found only in the civilian social science community and put into practice in varying ways.

Human Terrain and Sociocultural Knowledge

The Army framework centers on the concept of a *human domain,* which the 2012 Army Capstone Concept defines as the "totality of the physical, cultural, and social environments that influence human behavior."[35] The human domain extends understanding of the operational environment beyond the physical realm and is intended to be complimentary to the recognized domains of land, air, maritime, space, and cyberspace.[36] Although not consistently addressed in doctrine, the human domain construct is an attempt to account fully for the human aspects of conflict. *Human terrain*, on the other hand, is a term often misunderstood and like culture, tends to inherit various meanings given its close relationship within the human domain. Human terrain can be defined as the social, ethnographic, cultural, economic, and political elements of the people "among whom a force is operating." [37] The key to this definition is the emphasis on *where* a force is operating; meaning human terrain focuses on those elements that matter within a

[35]U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-0, *The U.S Army Capstone Concept* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 15.

[36]Bennet S. Sacolick and Wayne W. Grigsby Jr., "Special Operations/Conventional Forces Interdependence: A Critical Role in Prevent, Shape, Win," *ARMY* (June, 2012): 39-40, http://www.ausa.org/publications/armymagazine/archive/2012/06/Documents/Sacolick_0612.pdf (accessed 24 November 2013).

[37]Jacob Kipp et al., "The Human Terrain System: A CORDS for the 21st Century," *Military Review* (September-October 2006): 9.

geographical context.[38] Sociocultural knowledge is defined as "the knowledge pertaining to society and culture that has been synthesized and had judgment applied to a specific situation to comprehend the situations inner relationship."[39] In the context of this study, human terrain and sociocultural knowledge are used synonymously and represent the Army's approach to making social science knowledge relevant at the operational level by providing a framework of understanding. With respect to the term "social science," the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines it as "a branch of science that deals with the institutions and functioning of human society and with interpersonal relationships of individuals as members of society."[40] Throughout this monograph, the term social science is used broadly and includes, but is not limited to, the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology, area studies, behavioral science, economics, history, human geography, linguistics, and sociology among others. Ultimately, the information and knowledge must answer one question: what cultural knowledge does the commander need in order to maximize his chances of success? Thus, the term sociocultural knowledge is used to describe the answer to that question, regardless of its origins.

Sociocultural knowledge is made up of variables that include information about the social, cultural, and behavioral factors characterizing the relationships and activities of the

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[38]Michael L. Haxton, "Towards a Broader Definition and Understanding of the Human Dimension: Part 1," *Small Wars Journal* (3 September 2013), http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/ towards-a-broader-definition-and-understanding-of-the-human-dimension-part-1 (accessed on 26 January 2014).

[39]Christopher J. Lamb et al., *Human Terrain Teams: An Organizational Innovation for Sociocultural Knowledge in Irregular Warfare* (Washington, DC: Institute of World Politics Press, 2013), 7.

[40]Merriam-Webster Dictionary, s.v. "Social science," http://www.merriam webster.com/dictionary/social%20science (accessed 14 December 2013).

population of a specific region or operational environment.[41] The focus on relationships means that cultural knowledge also includes mapping of social networks, a mixture of interpersonal, organizational, and economic information, tribal connections, community institutions, and types of governments. Collecting and analyzing these types of sociocultural data require a multidisciplinary, methodological approach.[42] That is why diverse social science expertise is important and sociocultural knowledge is not solely an anthropologist's function. Each social science expert is informed by relevant theory and disciplinary methods and has the ability to collect that raw data and package in a way that commanders and staffs can understand.[43]

If the importance of cultural research in military operations and planning seems relatively clear, it may be less clear why the Army has had a difficult time maintaining a consistent capability to do so over the years. The collection and analysis of cultural knowledge within a military context is not a new imperative; the U.S. Army in general, has a long history of collaborating with the social science community as well as exploiting sociocultural knowledge in attempts to achieve success or gain an advantage particularly when engaged in irregular warfare. The root of the problem is America's cultural aversion to irregular warfare. Consider the words of Adrian Lewis in an essay based on his book, *The American Culture of War*. "Americans endeavor

[41]Defense Science Board, "Understanding Human Dynamics," Report, March 2009. www.acq.osd.mil/dsb/reports/ADA495025.pdf (accessed October 2014), 73.

[42]Ibid., 74.

[43]Lee E. Friedland, Gary W. Shaeff, and Jessica G. Turnley, "Sociocultural Perspective: A New Intelligence Paradigm," Report on the conference at MITRE Corporation McLean, VA, 12 September 2006, Document Number 07-1220/MITRE Technical Report MTR070244.

to minimize the human element in war and emphasize the role of materiel and technology."[44] This aversion has been demonstrated repeatedly as the US Army seeks to abide by its own cultural predisposition of operating within a limited war paradigm. The U.S. Army prefers conventional warfare, where it can fight a quick, decisive victory based on the principles of war, and enabled by superior technology. Understandably, this type of warfare does not require the same attention to sociocultural knowledge because the focus is on understanding and countering enemy military forces in conventional war[45] What it must do now is fully incorporate the lessons learned from past wartime efforts, and continue to commit resources to programs focused on the human domain, that will institutionalize and sustain the U.S. Army's ability to adapt and understand the environment when faced with similar situations in the future.

SECTION TWO

Historical Sociocultural Innovation in Military Operations

> Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.
> —George Santayana, *The Life of Reason*

History provides more than enough evidence illustrating that, "[War] is a profoundly human activity inspired by human emotions such as fear, honor, and interest…conducted by groups and institutions...occupied with human actors." [46] Even the likes of Alexander, Clausewitz,

[44]Adrian Lewis, *The American Culture of War: The History of US Military Force From World War II to Operation Iraqi Freedom* (New York: Routledge Press, 2007), 2, http://cw.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415979757/data/AmericanCultureofWarEssay.pdf (accessed on 12 March 2014).

[45]Defense Science Board, "Understanding Human Dynamics," 83.

[46]Frank Hoffman and Michael C. Davies, "Joint Force 2020 and the Human Domain: Time for a New Conceptual Framework?" *Small Wars Journal* (10 June 2013),

T. E. Lawrence and modern military thinkers all knew the importance of understanding the whole of the society in which they operated.[47] However, Army doctrine and the American approach to warfare often overlook this fundamental portrayal of war as a human endeavor. Colin S. Gray wrote, "There is no mode of warfare, conducted in any geographical environment, wherein the enemy's strategic culture is of no importance."[48] That is why sociocultural knowledge is advantageous to understanding human terrain and the effects of military operations in both counterinsurgencies and the contemporary operating environment. As stated earlier, this is not a new concept; The U.S. Army has a long history of learning and relearning lessons regarding the advantages of cultural knowledge. During its experience in the Philippine Insurrection of 1899-1902, the U.S. Army recognized the importance of cultural understanding by recruiting Filipino forces from ethnic and social backgrounds hostile to Aguinaldo.[49] This incorporation of indigenous forces enabled the United States to successfully defeat the nationalist insurgency, a victory that would likely have not been possible without their support.[50]

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http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/joint-force-2020-and-the-human-domain-time-for-a-new-conceptual-framework (accessed 15 December 2013).

[47]Michael Flynn et al., "Operational Relevance of Behavioral & Social Science to DoD Missions," Report (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013), 13.

[48]Colin S. Gray, *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2006), 34.

[49]Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 215.

[50]Ibid., 169.

During World Wars I and II, the U.S. government as a whole increasingly began to collaborate with academic scholars from within the social science disciplines in order to aid war efforts. In World War I, new relationships between anthropologists and military intelligence formed, with many researchers conducting espionage under the guise of scientific research, and others providing localized cultural and geographic information.[51] Throughout World War II, the Army and other government agencies capitalized on the social science knowledge base in attempts to gain an advantage over its adversaries.[52] Social scientists aided in the production of area studies and guides to assist troops with bridging the culture gap when operating in unfamiliar regions. Propaganda was also an area in which the social science community had a high degree of influence during the wars.[53]

Engaged in another complex irregular war in Vietnam, the U.S. Army again placed an emphasis on the sociocultural elements of the COIN fight. The Special Operations Research Office (SORO) was established during this time, enabling the co-opting of behavioral and social science communities in order to acquire human terrain knowledge to aid in solving operational problems.[54] The implementation of civil-military efforts such as the Strategic Hamlet and Civil

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[51]David H. Price, *Anthropological Intelligence: The Deployment and Neglect of American Anthropology in the Second World War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 14.

[52]Ibid., 18.

[53]Ibid., 42.

[54]Special Operations Research Office, "The U.S. Army's Limited War Mission and Social Science Research," Report, ed. William A. Lybrand (Washington, DC: American University, 1962), x. The Special Operations Research Office (SORO) employed anthropologists and other social science experts while operating under contract with the Department of the Army. All of its research focused on military problems from a human dynamics standpoint.

Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) programs and the creation of the U.S. Army Special Forces aimed to understand and influence local populations.[55] As with most of the historical examples mentioned above, the Army chose to downplay the sociocultural lessons learned after the wars in pursuit of other warfighting priorities within the service. The value of sociocultural knowledge continued to underscore U.S. interventions around the world with operations in the Balkans, Haiti, Somalia, and the Middle East, where American forces engaged in a broad range of diverse military operations, ranging from peacekeeping and enforcement to stabilization operations, to counterinsurgencies and counterterrorism operations. These operational experiences drew attention to deficiencies in the Army's ability to influence and operate effectively amongst dissimilar cultures for prolonged periods. As a result, the U.S. Army created the Human Terrain System to fill the gap in sociocultural understanding for conventional forces, by employing social science experts in direct support of military forces in theater. Likewise, a similar organizational innovation occurred during the Allied Occupation of Japan following World War II. Under the direction of General Douglas MacArthur, a relatively unknown staff organization called the Public Opinion and Research Organization (POSR) also utilized social scientists to facilitate and leverage his understanding of a completely unfamiliar population and its culture.

[55]Lamb et al. *Human Terrain Teams: An Organizational Innovation for Sociocultural Knowledge in Irregular Warfare*, 11.

Allied Occupation of Japan 1945-1952

Background and Context

The following case study on the Allied Occupation of Japan serves as an illustration of how sociocultural knowledge can enhance Army organizations' understanding of an unfamiliar population and adds fundamental value to the decision-making during military operations. Its relevance centers around the significant amount of time and resources the U.S. initially devoted to traditional intelligence methods at the onset of the occupation before recognizing it needed another capability to achieve successfully its objectives, similar to what the U.S. Army faced in Iraq in 2006. After the unconditional surrender of Japan in August 1945, General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), set out to make the Japanese authoritarian society into a democratic one. He immediately created a unique civilian and military headquarters that essentially integrated military and stability operations under a single chain of command, whose mission was to demilitarize and democratize the political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of Japan.[56] MacArthur later directed the addition and expansion of a new organization embedded in his staff called the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division (POSR) which employed American and Japanese social scientists who supplemented traditional intelligence data with viable sociocultural research and analysis. Its creation was a direct result of SCAPs MacArthur's need for a more suitable capability in determining what the Japanese thought of the democratic reforms being implemented, and if the policies were effective enough to endure beyond the occupation.

[56]Joe Moore and Jon Livingston, *The Japan Reader: Postwar Japan, 1945 to the Present* (New York: Random House, 1973), 7-11.

The Allied occupation of Japan refers to the six and a half year period following Japan's defeat in World War II from August 1945 to April 1952. The occupation of Japan, along with the parallel occupation of Germany represents the U.S.'s first experiences with using military forces to transform a society socially, politically, and economically. During the occupation, the U.S. successfully gained a better understanding of its former adversary and its operational environment by creating two organizations within General MacArthur's staff that focused almost exclusively on understanding Japanese thought, practices and culture utilizing sociocultural knowledge that better informed the decision-making process. Important lessons can be drawn from this example given the stark differences between American and Japanese culture, especially those having to do with creating a capability within the Army that capitalized on research and knowledge of the social science community.

After the surrender of Germany, leaders of the Allied powers met during the Potsdam Conference to discuss post-war policies in Europe and the way forward in Japan. One of the most noteworthy agreements that came out of the conference was the decision to occupy Japan once the Allies achieved victory in the Pacific.[57] The conference issued its decision, known as the Potsdam Declaration, on 26 July 1945. In it, the United States, Great Britain, and the Republic of China demanded the immediate and unconditional surrender of Japan or promised their complete destruction if they did not comply.[58] The Allies also agreed that demilitarization would be the

[57]U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, "Milestones: 1945-1952, Occupation and Reconstruction of Japan, 1945-52," http://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/japan-reconstruction (accessed 5 January, 2014).

[58]PBS, "Berlin Potsdam Conference 1945," *American Experience*, http://www.pbs.org/ wgbh/americanexperience/ features/primary-resources/ truman-potsdam/ (accessed 5 January 2014).

first policy of the occupation, bringing about the abolishment of Japan's armed forces; complete dismantling of its military industry, and the trial of Japanese war criminals. Additionally, the Potsdam Declaration called for democratic reforms in Japan's government and noted that the occupation would only end when all the conditions were met and "a peacefully inclined and responsible government" had been established in Japan.[59]

Lost in Translation?

Initially refusing to comment on the Potsdam Declaration due to no official decision having been reached by the Japanese Supreme War Council, Japanese Prime Minister Suzuki Kantaro made a statement to the media on 28 July 1945 concerning the Japanese governments' position on the ultimatum. "I consider the Joint Proclamation a rehash of the Declaration at the Cairo Conference. As for the Government, it does not attach any important value to it at all. Therefore, I am withholding comment. We will do nothing but press on to the bitter end to bring about a successful completion of the war."[60] In the original version of his statement, Suzuki used the Japanese verb *mokusatsu* (黙殺), which means to take no notice of; treat with silent contempt; ignore; remain in a wise and masterly inactivity.[61] Albeit not an official response from the Japanese government, when American and international news agencies translated his statement, the western powers interpreted it as a complete rejection to the terms of the declaration. John

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[59]Ibid.

[60]Richard B. Frank, *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* (New York: Random House, 1999), 234.

[61]Takenobu Yoshitarō, *Kenkyusha's New Japanese - English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1934), 1129.

Toland, in his book *The Rising Sun: The Decline and Fall of the Japanese Empire*, argued that the Japanese political leadership's intent may have been misunderstood based on the misinterpretation of the word *mokusatsu*.[62] He went on to state that Prime Minister Suzuki's choice of words and method of delivery was most likely dictated by his need to appease Japanese military leaders unreceptive to the idea of unconditional surrender rather than communicate an official decision to the Allies.[63] Boye Lafayette De Mente, an author who spent many years studying culture and business practices in Asia, offered some cultural insight into Japanese negotiations. He claimed that the use of time gaps or periods of silence weighed heavily in Japanese culture, especially when negotiating or discussing serious matters. He further suggested that the translation of *mokusatsu* as "contemptuously reject" was too strong and perhaps the Japanese government was not prepared to make an immediate response to the Allies despite Prime Minister's Suzuki's address to the press.[64] Nevertheless, it remains debatable as to whether the interpretation of the Japanese response would have made a significant difference. Within ten days of Suzuki's statement, President Truman ordered the atomic bombings of Hiroshima on 6 August and Nagasaki on 9 August effectively guaranteeing the capitulation of the Japanese government and enabling the resultant occupation of Japan shortly thereafter.

On 2 September 1945, Japanese Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu signed the Instrument of Surrender aboard the *USS Missouri* in Tokyo Bay formally succumbing to the

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[62]John Toland, *The Rising Sun. The Decline and Fall of the Japanese Empire* (New York: Random House, 1970), 957.

[63]Ibid.

[64]Boye De Mente, *Japan's Cultural Code Words: 233 Key Terms That Explain the Attitudes and Behavior of the Japanese* (Boston, MA: Tuttle Publications, 2004), 161-163.

terms of the Potsdam Declaration.[65] At war's end, an estimated 300,000 American troops had lost their lives along with almost two million Japanese soldiers and over 150,000 Japanese civilians killed in the bombings.[66] The truth behind whether the Japanese response to the declaration was misinterpreted may never be known, however the discussion serves as an excellent example of how limited cultural and language understanding at the strategic level can have devastating effects on the outcome of a war.

U.S. Objectives in Post-War Japan

After destroying Nagasaki on the evening of 9 August 1945, President Truman affirmed, "victory in a great war is something that must be won and kept won. It can be lost after you have won it—if you are careless or negligent or indifferent."[67] His message was clear, the U.S. intended on keeping the war in Europe and Japan won. On 6 September, 1945, President Truman approved the U.S. Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan which articulated U.S. policy at the start of the occupation.[68] It stated two broad objectives: the first was to insure Japan would never again become a "menace" to the United States or to the "peace and security of the world" and the second was to "bring about the eventual establishment of a peaceful and

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[65]Charles A. Willoughby, ed., *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1966), 32.

[66]John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 297-298.

[67]Harry S. Truman, "Radio Report to the American People on the Potsdam Conference," 9 August 1945, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12165 (accessed on 18 January 2014).

[68]Joe Moore and Jon Livingston, *The Japan Reader: Postwar Japan, 1945 to the Present* (New York: Random House, 1973), 7-11.

responsible government."[69] Truman appointed General Douglas MacArthur as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) imbuing him with unprecedented authority to execute the policy as he saw fit in order to achieve the objectives.[70]

SCAP divided the occupation into two phases, the first being a *demobilization* and *disarmament* phase in which SCAP military forces would rapidly demobilize the Imperial armed forces, execute a systematic demilitarization of any remaining Japanese military capability, and subdue any organized resistance. The process proved to be a tremendous undertaking given that it encompassed Japanese forces both at home and overseas which totaled approximately seven million armed men.[71] Also during this phase, many Japanese leaders responsible for leading the war effort were subsequently classified as war criminals, held before tribunals, and put to death.[72] The U.S. chose to spare Emperor Hirohito from trial and execution despite strong pressures for his removal from the United Kingdom and Soviet Union. Public sentiment in the United States reflected similar views, as most Americans considered the emperor ultimately responsible for the aggression and atrocities committed by the imperial military command during the war.[73] Based

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[69]Harry S. Truman Library, "Statement of Policy, Approved by the President, Relating to Post War Japan," *Public Papers of the Presidents: Harry S. Truman 1945-1953*, 6 September, 1945, http://trumanlibrary.org/publicpapers/index.php?pid=151&st=&st1= (accessed on 18 January, 2014).

[70]Moore and Livingston, *The Japan Reader: Postwar Japan, 1945 to the Present*, 7. SCAP also refers to the General Headquarters and occupation bureaucracy as a whole.

[71]Willoughby, *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase*, 117-148.

[72]Ibid, 53.

[73]Harold C. Deutsch and Dennis E. Showalter, *If the Allies Had Fallen: Sixty Alternate Scenarios of World War II* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2012), 74.

on the recommendation from General MacArthur, the decision to retain Hirohito was vital to maintaining order in post-war Japan. MacArthur was concerned that Hirohito's execution could trigger potential chaos and guerilla warfare in Japan, requiring a "million" reinforcements and he institution of a military government.[74] The Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed, stating that by retaining the imperial system and using the existing Japanese governmental structure, the occupation in Japan would be much easier compared to what they experienced in Europe.[75]

The second phase, *democratization,* called for economic and political reforms that later evolved to include economic rehabilitation since Japan's economy was largely based on foreign trade. Ultimately, the U.S. government's long-term goal was establishing democracy in Japan because American policymakers were convinced that democracy would be the best guarantee for Japan's peaceful and responsible conduct in the future.[76]

Key Parties or So They Thought

Although officially an Allied endeavor, the Occupation was primarily an American-led effort.[77] For one, the U.S. was the only nation with enough troops and transport capability to

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[74]Douglas MacArthur, *Douglas Macarthur Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 288.

[75]Willoughby, *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase,* 194.

[76]Robert E. Ward, "The American Occupation of Japan: Political Retrospect," International Studies, East Asian Series Research Publication, Number Two (Lawrence, KS: The University of Kansas, 1968), 2.

[77]Willoughby, *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase,* 69.

occupy Japan immediately after the war.[78] Additionally, from a strategic perspective, American political leadership wanted to prevent the Allies from having a controlling voice in the occupation of the Japanese home islands.[79] The Soviet Union recognized it was at a disadvantage by not having forces on the ground in Japan, but was unable to persuade the U.S. to change its approach. China was to send troops for garrison duty, however because of the civil war in China they never materialized.[80] The British Commonwealth was the only other Allied force directly participating in the occupation, sending its British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) to Japan in February 1946. The BCOF consisted of more than forty thousand army, navy and air troops and represented nations of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and India.[81] The BCOF was the first time Britain formed troops from differing nations into composite units, "who temporarily exchanging their national identities for a single British Commonwealth identity."[82] Upon arrival, the U.S. Eighth Army received the BCOF under its operational control and assigned it garrison duties in a zone outside the Tokyo area.[83]

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[78]John Curtis Perry, *Beneath the Eagle's Wings: Americans in Occupied Japan* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1980), 13.

[79]Takamae Eiji, *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy* (New York: Continuum International, 2002), 93.

[80]Perry, *Beneath the Eagle's Wings: Americans in Occupied Japan*, 11.

[81]Willoughby, *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase*, 72.

[82]Perry, *Beneath the Eagle's Wings: Americans in Occupied Japan*, 12.

[83]Willoughby, *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase*, 73-74.

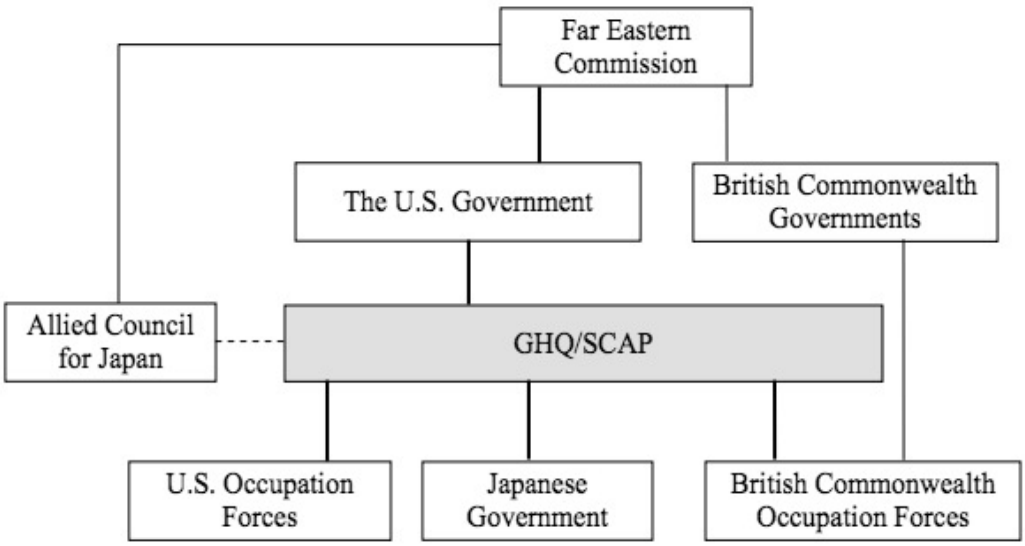

Figure 2. Occupation Governing Bodies

Source: Eiji, *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, 45.

In order to relieve political tensions between the U.S. and its Allies, the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers created the Far Eastern Commission and Allied Council for Japan in December 1945.[84] These two governing bodies enabled the Allied nations to have a part in the formulation of policy and standards for the Occupation. The Far Eastern Commission was located in Washington, DC and consisted of eleven member nations responsible for formulating policies and standards for accomplishing the terms of surrender and preparing the agenda for reshaping Japan.[85] Only the United Kingdom, China, and the Soviet Union had veto powers along with the US, but any member could request a review of directives issued to SCAP or any action

[84]Eiji, *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, 69.

[85]Perry, *Beneath the Eagle's Wings: Americans in Occupied Japan*, 51.

taken by General MacArthur involving policy decisions. The key limiting factor for the Commission was that it did not have any authority concerning territorial matters or over military operations, effectively leaving MacArthur in control.[86] The Allied Council for Japan was organized as a purely advisory body in Tokyo, serving as the "eyes and ears" of the Far Eastern Commission. The council was chaired by the Supreme Commander or his deputy, a senior civilian political advisor from the State Department and made up of representatives from the British Commonwealth, China, and the Soviet Union.[87] In the end, General MacArthur largely ignored them both seeing no practicality in the organizations. A member of his staff later asserted, "Not one constructive idea to help with the re-orientation and reconstruction of Japan was offered by either the Far East Commission or the Allied Council.[88] Therefore, the occupation was primarily an American enterprise.

Unfamiliar Territory

Thus, with the General Headquarters for SCAP established in Tokyo, American forces embarked on a large-scale nation-building effort in a society whose customs; values and beliefs differed greatly from western culture. It was an ambitious agenda; the U.S. set out to change the political and cultural mentality of an entire society with its democratization policy. The U.S. required a different approach than in post-war Europe. Unlike in Germany, the U.S. saw no reason to depose the existing civilian government or divide Japan into individual jurisdictions

[86]Ibid.

[87]Ibid., 52.

[88]Ibid., 53.

among Allied powers. Instead, SCAP set out to draft a new constitution for Japan that would empower the populace and allow Emperor Hirohito to remain the national figurehead. General MacArthur would then exercise his power through the Japanese government, allowing it to continue to manage its civil administration.[89] Likewise, in contrast to Europe and its western culture, Japan presented most Americans with completely unfamiliar habits, thinking, and language. So unfamiliar in fact, that Ruth Benedict, an anthropologist commissioned by the U.S. Office of War Information to study Japan during World War II wrote, "The Japanese were the most alien enemy the United States had ever fought."[90] For the thousands of American Soldiers that would serve in Japan, it meant life in a completely unfamiliar, non-Christian, racially different culture.[91]

Sociocultural Research and Analysis during the Occupation

MacArthur established General Headquarters, SCAP on 2 October 1945 organizing its staff similar to other conventional military staffs. Due to limited resources in theater, he assigned the general staff, United States Army Forces Pacific (USAFPAC) the additional duties of serving as the general staff for SCAP. In September 1945, USAFPAC directed SCAP to exercise its authority "…through the Japanese Governmental machinery and agencies, including the

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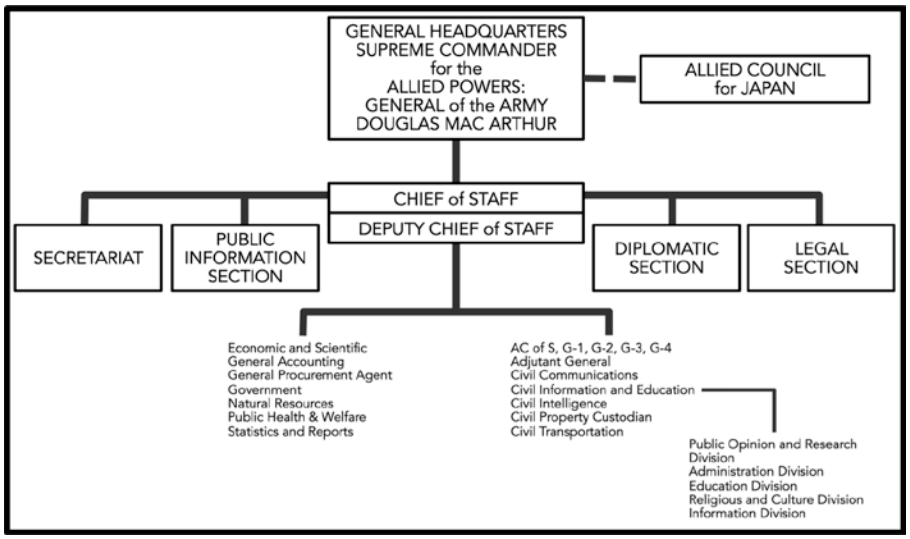
[89]Eiji, *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, 113.

[90]Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946), 1. Ruth Benedict was a cultural anthropologist commissioned by the U.S. Government in 1944 to prepare a study of the Japanese people. Although her book was not published until after the war, it was circulated widely in mimeographed form.

[91]Perry, *Beneath the Eagle's Wings: Americans in Occupied Japan*, xiii.

Emperor" to further U.S. objectives.[92] Given SCAP's primary role of providing direction and oversight to the Japanese government, several civil (non-military) staff sections were added to the organization. Each of the additional staff sections played a supervisory role in ensuring the Japanese authorities adhered to the policies and actions implemented by SCAP. Additionally, the staff sections were broken down further into divisions along functional lines that corresponded to branches of the Japanese bureaucracy and conducted research and analysis functions with respect to their designated focus areas.[93]



[92]Willoughby, *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase*, 75.

[93]Ibid., 73-81. A total of 10 special SCAP staff sections were created in October 1945 to correspond with the Japanese civil administration, several others were established later on. Of special interest to this monograph is the Civil Information and Education section containing the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division. Plate NO. 25 listed on page 71 of this document shows a graphical representation of the "Machinery of the Occupation from the Far Eastern Commission through SCAP to the Japanese people."

Figure 3. SCAP General Headquarters Staff Organization 1948 (Modified by author)

Source: Willoughby, *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase*, 72. Modified version of Plate No. 25.

During the early years of the occupation, two organizations within the headquarters performed functions that considered sociocultural implications of the occupation: G-2 Intelligence and the Civil Information and Education section. The G-2 processed its civil intelligence through a subordinate staff section called the Civil Intelligence Section (CIS). Serving primarily as an operating agency for the G-2, CIS routinely conducted counterintelligence, surveillance, and security activities that spanned the course of the occupation. Its main purpose was to conduct operations designed to identify and disband threats such as espionage, subversion, and national extremism facing occupation forces.[94] CIS provided its intelligence information to the SCAP staff and theater commanders through its contributions to the daily G-2 summary, as well as publishing a series of weekly internal reports titled "Occupational Trends—Japan and Korea" that compiled observations and trends across a number of broad topics such as politics, education, psychology, and religion.[95] The collective offering of information described in these reports became popular across the command because they

[94]Willoughby, *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase*, 80, 233, 260. The Civil Intelligence Section consisted of four major components while executing a broad set of tasks throughout the occupation: Operations Branch, a Counter Intelligence Corps, a Civil Censorship Detachment, and Public Safety Division. Additionally, a small staff section called the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS) employed U.S. soldiers and civilians who spoke Japanese and provided supported across the GHQ and SCAP staffs. The sections also include a number of Japanese nationals "Nisei" who normally conducted interrogations and performed routine work usually of an unclassified nature.

[95]Ibid., 257.

provided insight on how the Japanese viewed the occupation and American forces.[96] Overall, the intelligence provided by CIS further enabled the command to understand better certain aspects of its operational environment, especially during the demilitarization phase. However, the CIS section's principal focus was on dealing with immediate security threats facing occupation forces and had little to do with attempting to understand the Japanese mindset. The collection of data through conventional intelligence methods including the use of informants, interrogations, and telephone monitoring did not represent a comprehensive enough view of the Japanese or their acceptance of democratic reforms.[97] Given the extent of the reforms implemented in Japan, it soon became obvious to Macarthur and his staff that they needed a better means of understanding the Japanese population that was separate and distinct from intelligence collection.

The Civil Information and Education (CIE) section was responsible for advising SCAP on how its social reform policies involving "public education, religion, and other sociological problems of Japan" were being implemented and accepted by the Japanese. Its original mandate also included making recommendations on how best to eliminate militarism and ultra-nationalism from the Japanese school system, as well as providing input on preserving cultural and religious institutions and artifacts.[98] The CIE mandate later expanded to include "disseminating democratic ideals and principles" and conducting scientific sociocultural research in support of occupation

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[96]Michael B. Meyer, *A History of Socio-Cultural Intelligence and Research Under the Occupation Of Japan* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2009), 7.

[97]Ibid., 6.

[98]Willoughby, *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase*, 80.

goals. [99] When the new constitution was enacted on 3 May 1947, it granted the Japanese people with civil liberties and a form of government to which they were not accustomed. Consequently, the Japanese government established a system of public opinion agencies across Japan with the same purpose in mind – understanding what people thought of the occupation in order to inform policymakers on the effects and progress of the new reforms. SCAP established the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Unit (POSR) within the CIE section in response to the need to assess and unify the operations of the opinion agencies in Japan. [100] According to POSRs first director, Dr. Herbert Passin, the unit's task was more than it could handle during its first year due to the limited number of qualified personnel within SCAP that spoke Japanese or had sufficient knowledge of the social intricacies required to interpret the available data effectively.[101] With only five social scientists supervising almost 50 Japanese staff personnel, Dr. Passin began an effort to improve POSRs data collection capability, contending that the section's reliance on information provided by CIS was inadequate and did not represent a holistic view of the Japanese mindset.[102] Although his recommendation for expansion of the unit was raised to General MacArthur, the new constitution and emerging economic crisis in Japan were the focus of SCAP

[99]Eiji, *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, 180.

[100]John W. Bennett, "A History of the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division, SCAP." Previously published in chapter 1 of Bennett and Ishino, *Paternalism and the Japanese Economy: Anthropological Studies of Pyabun-Kobun Patterns* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 1962, http://library.osu.edu/projects/bennett-in-japan/3a_docs.html (accessed on 31 January 2014). Dr. John W. Bennett was a civilian anthropologist and Far East Asia expert from Ohio State University who served as the second Chief of the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division from 1949 to 1951.

[101]John A. Miller, *The Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division: Attempting to Understand the Japanese During the American Occupation*, 8.

[102]Ibid., 15.

efforts and little was done to correct the deficiencies, allowing the G-2 to retain priority in both manpower and resources leaving the POSR unit to function at a limited capacity for the time being.

In 1947, social science experts, SCAP invited Dr. Clyde Kluckhohn, Dr. Raymond Bowers, and Dr. Herbert Hyman to Japan to assess the CIE section in an effort to identify options on how best it could accomplish its tasks. During their assessment, they visited survey offices throughout Japan, interviewing Japanese social scientists already conducting surveys on Japanese public opinion.[103] Further, the team took a comprehensive look at the resources and methods CIE used in supporting its mandate, noting that given the scope of the sections responsibilities, it lacked the personnel and resources to effectively manage its efforts. The majority of American personnel who knew Japanese worked for the Allied Translation and Interpretation Service (ATIS), an organization within the General Headquarters that provided primarily translation, interrogation, and interpreter support to key civil and military sections in SCAP.[104] The G-2 received priority for much of ATIS's work; often preventing the CIE section from sifting through the data it did manage to collect. A lack of qualified social scientists meant that the organization also had little means of analyzing it from a sociological perspective.

The findings of the staff study were provided in a briefing titled the Kluckhohn-Bowers Report, in which they recommended that the POSR unit be upgraded, forming a new section that it could conduct scientific based sociological research in conjunction with its Japanese

[103]Ibid.

[104]Willoughby, *Reports of General MacArthur, MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase*, 260.

counterparts. Although, not considered intelligence, they also asserted that sociocultural information would provide SCAP and his staff important considerations when planning and making decisions.[105] The report concluded with the statement "although the primary long-term purpose of the Occupation is to alter [the] Japanese [lifestyle] so that Japan will become and remain a peaceful and cooperative member of the democratic family of nations, there exists at present no trustworthy means of assessing progress toward this objective that is obtained over various periods of time."[106] In other words, SCAP needed a reliable means of collection and research that could focus on evaluating public opinion concerning the many reforms taking place in Japan. Given the scope of their tasks, CIE needed additionally resources and personnel, preferably with social science backgrounds, that could collect and analyze information utilizing scientific methods instead of relying on intelligence gathering techniques. Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel Donald R. Nugent, head of CIE favored the proposal and briefed General MacArthur on its recommendation to expand the POSR unit, however, due to budget constraints, SCAP deemed the team's proposal too costly for implementation at that time.[107]

One year later, Dr. Florence Powdermaker, a prominent psychiatrist, spent several months in Japan serving as a consultant for social research for SCAP under the "Visiting Expert

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[105]Michael B. Meyer, *A History of Socio-Cultural Intelligence and Research Under the Occupation Of Japan* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2009), 12.

[106]John A. Miller, *The Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division: Attempting to Understand the Japanese During the American Occupation*, 7.

[107]John W. Bennett, "A History of the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division, SCAP," http://library.osu.edu/projects/bennett-in-japan/3a_docs.html (accessed on 31 January 2014).

Program."[108] A 1948 SCAP document outlined the purpose of her visit as "determining the areas of CIE and SCAP research and operational problems in which psychological and social-psychiatric problems exist; indicate in which areas the application of the psychological point of view will be useful.[109] During her trip, Dr. Powdermaker worked closely with the SCAP headquarters sections and traveled extensively throughout Japan evaluating the challenges Americans faced in understanding the Japanese as it worked to change a society based on Eastern values.[110] SCAP had developed methods of collecting information on how the democratic reforms were being accepted, but the analysis was often deemed biased and unreliable by its researcher and analysis staff, who claimed interrogations and intercepts of mail and telephone conversations did not reflect the opinions of the greater population.

She detailed the outcome of her research trip in her "Report of Mission" and submitted to General MacArthur on October 11, 1948.[111] To summarize, Dr. Powdermaker noted "changing values, the accepting of revolutionary ideas are usually a slow and often painful process…[that]

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[108]Michael B. Meyer, *A History of Socio-Cultural Intelligence and Research Under the Occupation Of Japan*, 12. After World War II, the "Visiting Expert Program" became popular in both European and Pacific Theater of Operations because it allowed the allied commands to grant specialist from a variety of fields the opportunity to conduct research and consult for several months at a time, offering new points of view and recommendations on improving processes. Lieutenant Colonel Donald Nugent was a Marine Corps reservist with experience as a high school principal that served as the second chief of Civilian Information and Education Section from 1946 to the end of the occupation.

[109]John A. Miller, *The Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division: Attempting to Understand the Japanese During the American Occupation*, 16.

[110]Michael B. Meyer, *A History of Socio-Cultural Intelligence and Research Under the Occupation Of Japan*, 12.

[111]John A. Miller, *The Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division: Attempting to Understand the Japanese During the American Occupation*, 18.

the occupation has sought to [accelerate]," but could be accomplished given the right focus.[112] She was confident that SCAP could accomplish its occupation objectives more effectively if there were a more sociologically-based approach used when working with the Japanese because with such an approach, the "attitudes and efforts of the Japanese [could] be studied and scientifically ascertained with a high degree of validity." Doing so would foster a better understanding of Japanese culture as well as gain their "cooperation and friendship" at the same time.[113] Her report concluded with several recommendations. For one, upgrading POSR to division status could increase its capacity to support the rest of the staff with detailed analysis applicable to their functions. The division status would also provide a larger budget and more influence within SCAP, especially needed during the democratization phase of the occupation. She also recommended the reassigning of social scientists and other administrative personnel who were underutilized in other sections.[114] Lastly, Dr. Powdermaker proposed that POSRs' capabilities would best support SCAP objectives by focusing its collection and research efforts on three areas regarding Japanese social problems: "(1) changing relations between Japanese people and their government, (2) conflicts between traditional hierarchical organization of Japanese society and reforms to be achieved on the part of SCAP, and (3) sociological factors associated with both

[112]Michael B. Meyer, *A History of Socio-Cultural Intelligence and Research Under the Occupation Of Japan*, 11.

[113]Ibid., 12.

[114]John W. Bennett, "A History of the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division, SCAP," http://library.osu.edu/projects/bennett-in-japan/3a_docs.html (accessed on 31 January 2014).

understanding and reforming the Japanese economy."[115]

Shortly thereafter, General MacArthur approved the expansion of POSR, promoting it to division status in October 1948. Budget considerations, as with the Kluckhohn-Bowers proposal influenced his decision as to what extent the POSR unit would be improved. Likewise, over the course of 1947-1948, many staff sections became increasingly frustrated with not having accurate metrics on the effects of SCAP reforms.[116]

Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division

As a result, in 1948 the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Unit became a division that remained organized within the Civil Information and Education Section. Its purpose was twofold. First, it was to train and guide Japanese public opinion agencies in gathering opinion data, and then to provide the SCAP staff with unclassified sociological research based studies and reports concerning democracy-building efforts in Japan.[117] Coming at a time when SCAP was transitioning from implementation of democratic reforms to managing them, Japanese public opinion became a primary means of assessing SCAP progress towards it objectives.

The POSR Division was comprised of both American and Japanese civilians and had no military personnel assigned – which was not uncommon within CIE given its role of interfacing with the many Japanese governmental organizations. SCAP manpower estimates show that POSR

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[115]Michael B. Meyer, *A History of Socio-Cultural Intelligence and Research Under the Occupation Of Japan*, 12.

[116]John A. Miller, *The Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division: Attempting to Understand the Japanese During the American Occupation*, 20.

[117]Ibid., 11.

employed 12 Department of the Army (DA) civilians, 48 Japanese staff, and numerous other American civilian specialists.[118] The 12 DA civilians were primarily cultural anthropologists and sociologists with varying levels of language proficiency and experience in their fields of study. The Japanese staff consisted of social scientists, translators, and administrative clerks who were supervised by the DA civilians. Bennett, in his book, *Paternalism and the Japanese Economy: Anthropological Studies of Pyabun-Kobun Patterns*, explained that the majority of American social scientist assigned to SCAP during the occupation were young and inexperienced, some of which were still in graduate training, whereas, many of the Japanese social scientists were experienced anthropologists, sociologists and social psychologists who also had experience in foreign academic and research institutions.[119] Although the Japanese social scientists remained relegated to a subordinate role on the SCAP staff, they were critical to the functionality of the POSR division.[120]

As a research division, and because of the nature of its work, POSR staff did not prescribe how SCAP agencies used the information they collected nor were they authorized to

[118]Ibid., 20.

[119]John W. Bennett, "A History of the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division, SCAP," http://library.osu.edu/projects/bennett-in-japan/3a_docs.html (accessed on 31 January 2014).

[120]Herbert Passin, *Encounter With Japan* (Tokyo: Kodansha International. 1982), 126-127. Dr. Passin was a social anthropologist who served as Deputy Chief of the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division from 1946-1951. Passin spoke fluent Japanese at the time of his posting in Japan, having attended the Army Intensive Japanese Language School. After the war, he became widely known as a scholar on Japanese culture, serving as a university professor and publishing several after World War II.

initiate reform policies or directives.[121] POSR's mission as outlined in its Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) dated 5 November 1948, was to "inform SCAP of matters of Japanese society and social organization that relate to the Occupation and the rehabilitation program," as well as "Japanese public opinion and other psychosocial reactions to the occupation." POSR's mission statement concluded with the task "to maintain general surveillance over the public opinion research activities of Japanese government agencies."[122] Simply put, POSR was an organization created to inform the understanding of SCAP and the other staff sections by utilizing sociological grounded methods of research and analysis.

POSR accomplished its mission by utilizing an indirect and multidisciplinary approach, enabling the division to support SCAP more effectively. To address intra-organizational concerns regarding intelligence collection and public opinion data, a boundary was set between the G-2 and POSR, establishing the POSR division as the "official collector of public opinion" for SCAP.[123] Doing so permitted POSR's reports and studies to remain unclassified and distributed among the headquarters, as well as prevent what Passin called "inadequate" data being collected through "biased" means.[124] Next, a protocol for requesting polling and sociological research projects was established, requiring the various staff sections and other organizations to submit

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[121]John A. Miller, *The Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division: Attempting to Understand the Japanese During the American Occupation*, 36.

[122]Ibid., 36.

[123]John W. Bennett, "A History of the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division, SCAP," http://library.osu.edu/projects/bennett-in-japan/3a_docs.html (accessed on 13 February 2014).

[124]John A. Miller, *The Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division: Attempting to Understand the Japanese During the American Occupation*, 14.

requests for research to POSR. An informal board within the division would then assess the topic, decide how best to approach it, and then conduct research and analysis, whose result would be reported back to the section for its consideration. Standard procedure for each study consisted of assembling a sociological research team made up of American and Japanese POSR members who would conduct the research utilizing a variety of scientific techniques, such as polling, demographic and sociological surveys, and fieldwork.[125] The division supported a variety of projects during the occupation, with topics that ranged from land reform to labor issues and women's rights. Their work included administering a number of attitude surveys from 1948 to 1951, and according to Bennett, the sociological studies the division distributed within SCAP Headquarters regarding attitudes on occupation reform programs and "social trends" in Japan were popular products with the staff.[126]

A key aspect of the POSR division's methodology was its use of Japanese personnel to collect public opinion through the conduct of interviews, as well as working closely with the existing Japanese public opinion agencies. Naturally, Japanese researchers understood the culture and psychology of the civilian population; they could provide better analysis rather than simply translating. Accordingly, the use of Japanese citizens helped to dispel the fear and mistrust of many people, who were often suspicious of American intentions.[127] Without those barriers, POSR was able to collect and provide information reflecting true Japanese perspectives in its research.

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[125]John W. Bennett, "Inland Sea: Census and Family Research," http://library.osu.edu/projects/bennett-in-japan/2_11_photos.html (accessed 20 February 2014).

[126]Ibid.

[127]John A. Miller, *The Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division: Attempting to Understand the Japanese During the American Occupation*, 14.

Their approach also served another purpose, it gave American social scientists the opportunity to train and educate the Japanese in polling techniques and "Western methods" of applied social science and theory, broadening their perspectives.[128] Ultimately, the POSR division removed itself from the collection of public opinion data altogether and focused on advising the Japanese opinion collection agencies. By 1950, the division dedicated most of its efforts to sociological studies and reanalyzing data received from the Japanese.[129]

As the Allied occupation began draw to a close, General MacArthur directed major changes made to the SCAP headquarters structure.[130] U.S. attention shifted to the Korean Peninsula when North Korean forces invaded South Korea on 25 June 1950. Shortly afterward, President Truman named MacArthur commander-in-chief of United Nations forces in Korea.[131] In order to consolidate his resources, MacArthur ordered implementation of a reassessment of the SCAP staff sections which resulted in many staff sections being either deactivated or combined. The assessment identified the CIE Section as one of those sections whose capabilities would be reduced. According to a G-1 Manpower Analysis report, the POSR division was no longer needed because the Japanese were capable of conducting their own public opinion and attitude polls along with the associated research.[132] The report went on to recommend that POSR and two other

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[128]Ibid., 23.

[129]John W. Bennett, "A History of the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division, SCAP," http://library.osu.edu/projects/bennett-in-japan/3a_docs.html (accessed on 13 February 2014).

[130]Ibid.

[131]Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 337.

[132]John A. Miller, *The Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division: Attempting to Understand the Japanese During the American Occupation*, 40.

offices, the Educational Research Branch and the Information Media Branch, be combined into one division that would administer the functions of all three. Dr. Bennett, the POSR chief at the time, objected to the recommendation. He submitted his response in the form of an analysis of the G-1 proposal stating that although the Japanese had been trained, they "were not yet competent or qualified" and "all of the public opinion surveys done for SCAP…are conceived, planned, and directed by Americans; the Japanese merely do the interviewing and routine processing."[133] Nonetheless, SCAP had met its objectives in democratizing the Japanese government; all of the policies espoused from the beginning were set in place. The Occupation leadership understood that it could not afford to remain involved in some areas indefinitely. Thus, Bennett's argument was not accepted, and the POSR division deactivated in June 1951.[134] The Occupation continued for another year, ending with the signing and ratification of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in September 1952, officially ending World War II.

Assessment

During the occupation of Japan, the POSR division was instrumental in providing sociocultural grounded information that better enabled MacArthurs' understanding of the people that made up his operational environment. It also gave the staff insight into how best to incorporate Western reform policies within Japanese society.[135] Without a doubt, "assessing and influencing Japanese public opinion was fundamental to the creation of a democratic postwar

[133]Ibid., 40.

[134]Ibid., 41.

[135]Michael B. Meyer, *A History of Socio-Cultural Intelligence and Research Under the Occupation Of Japan*, 15.

Japan."[136] The inclusion of social science research was well suited in this case given the need to understand a foreign culture far removed from what most Americans were familiar with.

In retrospect, nation building in Japan does not appear as difficult as it has been in Iraq and Afghanistan. The occupation did not ignite a guerilla war as some had feared early on, nor did it require the Allies to conduct counterinsurgency operations. Japan, with its more homogenous and economically productive society accepted and embraced defeat along with the reforms implemented by the United States.[137] In contrast, Iraq and Afghanistan are tribal, heterogeneous, and less developed societies where the U.S. found itself embroiled in a counterinsurgency for over twelve years.[138] Nonetheless, both instances illustrate how the Army developed an institutional approach based on the emerging need for cultural understanding.

Just as the circumstances of Iraq and Afghanistan point to the potential need for a different model from that employed in post-war Japan, HTS faces a similar challenge today as the Army begins to shift its primary focus away from Afghanistan and move on to other priorities in an uncertain environment. The Allied Occupation of Japan reinforces the principal utility that sociocultural analysis and research bring to military operations. This episode in history should serve as a reminder that war is a human endeavor, a social problem, and no amount of technology

[136]Tessas Morris-Suzuki, "Ethnic Engineering: Scientific Racism and Public Opinion Surveys in Midcentury Japan," *Project Muse* 8, no 2, (Fall 2000), http://muse.jhu.edu/login?auth=0&type=summary&url=/ journals/ positions/v008/8.2morris-suzuki.pdf (accessed 5 March 2014).

[137]Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, 227.

[138]Michael B. Meyer, *A History of Socio-Cultural Intelligence and Research Under the Occupation Of Japan*, 17.

or military power will guarantee success in such a complex environment without understanding the people who operate in it.[139]

SECTION THREE

The Human Terrain System

Background and Context

As the situation developed in Iraq and Afghanistan, Army leadership was beginning to realize that sociocultural knowledge was becoming a critical requirement for its deployed forces. At the time of the Iraq ground war in March of 2003, calls for the need to understand human terrain and the urging for more cultural awareness across the Army were already underway. During testimony before the House Armed Services Committee in October 2003, Retired Major Robert H. Scales Jr., testified that the "United States did not have the capability to conduct a counterinsurgency in Iraq because it lacked sociocultural knowledge of local human terrain."[140] Later, with regard to Afghanistan and Iraq, Scales noted that he believed "an exceptional ability to understand people, their culture, and their motivation" was paramount to accomplishing objectives and winning the wars.[141]

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[139]Frank Hoffman and Michael C. Davies, "Joint Force 2020 and the Human Domain: Time for a New Conceptual Framework?" *Small Wars Journal* (10 June 2013), http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/joint-force-2020-and-the-human-domain-time-for-a-new-conceptual-framework (accessed 15 December 2013).

[140]Lamb et al., *Human Terrain Teams: An Organizational Innovation for Sociocultural Knowledge in Irregular Warfare*, 26.

[141]Robert H. Scales Jr., "Culture-Centric Warfare," *Proceedings*, United States Naval Institute 130, no. 10 (October 2004): 33.

The U.S. Army Human Terrain System (HTS) was created in 2006 in response to the worsening situation in Iraq and Afghanistan. HTS was designed to address cultural shortcomings at the operational and tactical levels, providing commanders with an organic capability to help understand the human terrain.[142] Between 2005 and 2007 U.S. forces in both theaters submitted a series of Joint Urgent Operational Needs Statements (JUONS) to the Department of Defense.[143] These requests were driven by operational gaps and deficiencies in regards to "detailed knowledge of the host population," and insufficient understanding of the target areas culture on operational decisions, something commanders recognized as critical to their success while conducting counterinsurgency and stability operations.[144] Units in Iraq were experiencing an increase in violence; specifically improvised explosive device (IED) attacks, the bulk of which were later deemed retaliatory in nature.[145] Additionally, given the unfamiliar and complex social structures, commanders found it difficult to ascertain who to trust or how to disassociate the populace from the insurgency, many expressing the operational need for a cultural advisor. In Afghanistan, senior leaders noted that because commanders and staffs did not have knowledge of the local population, such as the composition and loyalties of an Afghan tribe and village, their military operations often led to negative effects and violence resulting in the increased loss of

[142]Kipp et al, "The Human Terrain System: A CORDS for the 21st Century," 9.

[143]Department of the Army, Human Terrain System (HTS), *Army Posture Statement*, https://secureweb2.hqda.pentagon.mil/vdas_armyposturestatement/2010/information_papers/Human_Terrain_Systems_(HTS).asp, (accessed 17 August 2013).

[144]Montgomery McFate and Steven Fondacaro, "Reflections on the Human Terrain System During the First 4 Years," *Prism* 2, no.4 (September 2011): 67.

[145]U.S. Army Human Terrain System, "The History of the Human Terrain System," November 2013, http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/history.html (accessed August, 2013).

Soldiers' lives.[146] In one instance, this experience led Major General Benjamin Freakley, Commander of Afghanistan Combined Joint Task Force 76, to write that an enhanced capability grounded in social and cultural factors to help understand and influence the behavior of the affected population was needed.[147] The pressing concerns of combat commanders resonated with Army leadership, which highlighted the Army's emerging capability gaps in human terrain. Army commanders at the tactical and operational level needed expert sociocultural knowledge to aid in their engagement of the population. Additionally, the data and information collected would need to be shared and passed on as units deployed and redeployed. Finally, the information would need to be more than simply collecting facts and figures. The sociocultural data had to have a level of research and analysis applied in order to be relevant to the decisionmaking and operations of the deployed staffs.[148]

In 2005, a parallel effort to create a software program named the Cultural Preparation of the Environment (CPE) tool was ongoing.[149] Designed to be a portable electronic guide to the human terrain, it was meant to be a combination of a geographic information system and a social network analysis system that tactical and operational units could use for immediate, but limited access to sociocultural information on their area of operation. Additionally, the CPE tool was meant to reduce the loss of information after unit rotations by serving as a continually updated

[146]McFate and Fondacaro, "Reflections on the Human Terrain System During the First 4 Years," 68.

[147]Ibid., 67.

[148]Steve Chill, "One of the Eggs in the Joint Force Basket: HTS in Iraq/Afghanistan and Beyond," *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin* (October-December 2011): 11.

[149]Lamb et al., *Human Terrain Teams: An Organizational Innovation for Sociocultural Knowledge in Irregular Warfare* (Washington, DC: Institute of World Politics Press, 2013), 34.

database.[150] During field-testing in Iraq, the CPE was deemed insufficient after brigade staffs were found to be "overloaded with gadgets," and not interested in another one to support their mission.[151] JIEDDO in collaboration with TRADOC determined that technology was not the solution to the problem and set into motion the concept that would embed social science experts on the staffs of deployed units. In order to address these concerns, United States Central Command (CENTCOM) validated the needs statements, and with the approval of DOD established the requirement for Human Terrain Teams to support Army brigade combat teams (BCT) and Marine regimental combat teams (RCT). Human Terrain Analysis Teams (HTATs) were created to support U.S. Army division or Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) headquarters in both Iraq and Afghanistan.[152]

Securing initial funding through the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO), HTS organizers began efforts to field five human terrain teams as part of its "proof of concept" phase from 2007 to 2009.[153] The first two teams were deployed to

[150]Ibid., 28. Author notes that geographic information system technology captures, stores, analyzes, and displays geographic data such as terrain, population characteristics, and man-made objects in ways that reveal relationships, patterns, and trends in the form of maps, globes, reports and charts. Additionally, social anthropologists initially created the Social Network Analysis as a tool to capture relations within a human society.

[151]McFate and Fondacaro, *Reflections on the Human Terrain System During the First 4 Years*, 66.

[152]Steve Chill, "One of the Eggs in the Joint Force Basket: HTS in Iraq/Afghanistan and Beyond" 11-15.

[153]Ibid. Proof of concept refers to programs that are funded on a non-permanent basis in order to demonstrate feasibility, after which it is either terminated or designated a program of record. See DoD Instruction 7000.14-R for more information on this subject.

Afghanistan in February 2007, followed by subsequent teams in Iraq between 2007 and 2008.[154] For the next three years, the HTS project, organized within the TRADOC G-2, focused on responding to the JUONS by rapidly acquiring personnel and training resources in order to provide more teams to Iraq and Afghanistan as the operational requirements escalated. By mid-2010, there were 10 human terrain teams in Iraq and 12 human terrain teams in Afghanistan supporting U.S. and NATO brigades. TRADOC leadership recognized that HTS was at a transition point from being a project to an enduring Army organization capable of supporting current and future missions when CENTCOM approved the requirement for 31 teams by the summer of 2011.[155] The need for HTTs diminished in Iraq with the subsequent withdrawal of forces completed in December 2011, allowing HTS to field more teams in the Afghanistan area of operations and as of December 2012, there were 31 HTTs elements in Afghanistan.[156] As the organization matured, its focus centered on clearly defining HTS capabilities in support of the Department of Defense and training its personnel on and establishing processes, procedures and standards internally in order to improve its sociocultural support to operations.[157] HTS continues to evolve and refine its practices and organization to best meet the operational requirements of the Army while adapting to training and personnel challenges it experienced over its first few years.

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[154]Lamb et al., *Human Terrain Teams: An Organizational Innovation for Sociocultural Knowledge in Irregular Warfare,*46.

[155]Ibid.,78.

[156]Ibid.

[157]Sharon R. Hamilton "HTS Director's Message" Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin, October-December 2011, A1.

What follows is a brief description of the HTS organization and the capabilities the Army fielded to meet the needs of its forces during COIN operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

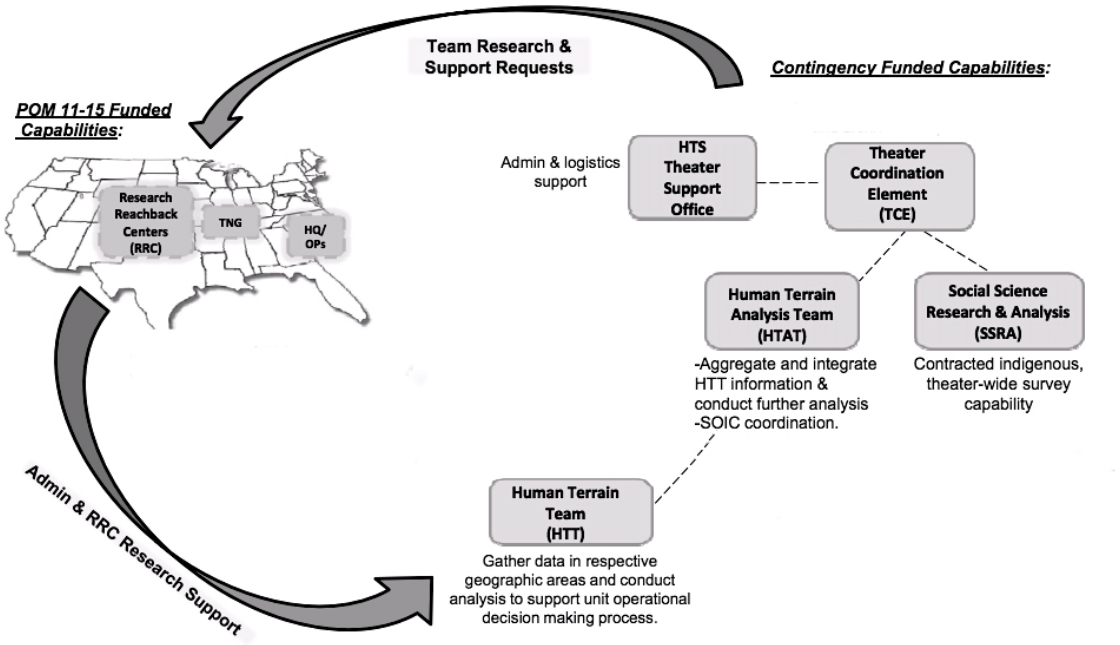

Figure 4. Human Terrain System Organization (Modified by author) [158]

Source: Christopher King, "Human Terrain System Organization," chart.

[158]Christopher King, "Human Terrain System Organization," chart, Anthropology Colloquium Series: The Five Year Development, Current State, Future Direction of Human Terrain System and Social Science with the U.S. Government and Military, September 29, 2012, http://www.anthropology.hawaii.edu/newsevents/colloquium/archive/f11/CAKing%20UHM%20Anthro%20Sept%202011.pdf (accessed February 2014).

Organization and Capabilities

The Human Terrain System seeks to develop, train, and integrate a social science based research and analysis capability to support operationally relevant decision-making, to develop a knowledge base, and to enable sociocultural understanding across the operational environment.[159] To accomplish its mission, HTS places experienced civilian social scientists and regional experts in direct support of deployed units engaged in operations abroad. Fundamental to its support is the idea that the HTS teams use their unique social science expertise to help decode and express the characteristics of the human terrain in order to aid unit leadership in understanding their specific operational environment.[160] The HTS concept shown in Figure 4 illustrates how HTS provides current, accurate and relevant sociocultural information that is generated from "on-the-ground" research, to units planning and executing operations.

HTS currently consists of the following components. Forward deployed Human Terrain Teams (HTT), that provide tactical-level support to brigade level commanders by conducting field research of the local population to define the "human terrain" and help the commander assess the "so what" of the sociocultural information that they provide.[161] Typically, HTTs

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[159]U.S. Army Human Terrain System, http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/ (accessed August, 2012).

[160]Norman Nigh, *An Operator's Guide to Human Terrain Teams*, CIWAG Case Study Series (Newport, RI: US Naval War College, 2012), 34, www.usnwc.edu/...e24d.../Nigh-final-for-website.pdf (accessed January 2014), 8. HTS employs social scientists from all social science disciplines including linguistics, anthropology, sociology, psychology and political science.

[161]U.S. Army Human Terrain System, http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/deployedTeams.html (accessed February, 2013). As of 6 January 2014 the HTS website was updated and may reflect different information than what was listed at the start of this research paper. One notable change is its mission, which was previously stated as: Conduct operationally-relevant, open-source social science research, and provide commanders and staffs at the brigade,

consist of five to nine military and Department of the Army civilian personnel organized with a team leader, one or two social scientist, a research manager and a human terrain analyst at a minimum.[162] When manning permits, the HTTs deploy at least one woman member to facilitate access to the female population.[163] HTS does not source its own interpreters; instead they are managed and provided by the supported commands in theater. A key component of the HTT is the Team leader, normally a reserve or former military officers responsible for integrating the HTT into the units' decisionmaking process effectively and serving as the commander's principal human terrain advisor.[164] The teams are built around the social scientists, who collect and provide the requisite sociocultural information. Every social scientist is an expert in their field of study, most of which are cultural anthropologists, sociologists, or international relations to name a few. Applying scientific research methods and managing ethnographic and social science research enable the social scientists to support the commander's decisionmaking process by applying sociocultural knowledge to problem solving and potential solutions.[165] HTTs are embedded with

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regimental and division levels with an embedded knowledge capability, to establish a coherent, analytical cultural framework for operational planning, decision-making, and assessment.

[162]U.S. Army Human Terrain System, "Human Terrain Teams," http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/htt.html (accessed February 2013).

[163]Ibid.

[164]Nathan Finney, *Human Terrain Team Handbook* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Human Terrain System, September 2008), 12. The HTT handbook was written to provide a base of knowledge for HTT members and presents a detailed explanation of all HTS components, including duties and responsibilities, best practices, and METL listings. Basic team member functions are also provided on the HTS website at http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/teamMemberFunctions.html (accessed 5 March 2014).

[165]Ibid.

units when they deploy into theater and operate as a staff support element. As an added benefit, the HTTs do not rotate in and out of theater as a whole, instead, their personnel are individually replaced at nine month increments, allowing them to maintain continuity when it comes to engaging and understanding the population, and sharing that knowledge with newly arrived combat units. The focal point of the HTT is in helping the staff build a contextual understanding of the population, such as their perceptions, needs and reactions through face-to face interactions. HTTs routinely collect and processes population-centric information within the diplomatic, economic and information environments that are not usually a priority for traditional staff sections. Utilizing quantitative and qualitative social science research methodologies, HTTs ensure relevant and timely information complements the military decision making process.

Additionally, HTS fields Human Terrain Analysis Teams (HTAT). HTATs are integrated at the operational level and provide direct support to division, regional, and theater levels staffs.[166] The HTAT has an organizational structure and purpose similar to that of the HTT; however, its activities integrate the analysis of all HTTs operating in the AOR, often coordinating research studies across brigade boundaries.[167] This operating procedure does not mean that the HTATs control or direct HTTs to conduct specific research, brigade commanders determine HTT priorities and division commanders determine HTAT priorities.[168] What it does permit is the sharing of relevant information adding to the overall common operating picture (COP). In 2012,

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[166]U.S. Army Human Terrain System, "Human Terrain Analysis Teams," http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/htat.html (accessed February 2013).

[167]Yvette Clinton et al, *Congressionally Directed Assessment of the Human Terrain System* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, 2010), 20.

[168]Ibid., 21.

there were seven HTATs supporting each of the regional command headquarters in Afghanistan.[169] A Social Science Research and Analysis (SSRA) capability also makes up a portion of the human terrain system. According to the HTS website, the SSRA team develops contracts for research and analysis support in theater such as local polling organizations, subject matter experts, surveys, and interviews of the local population by native personnel[170] Particularly key to the SSRA support is its use of indigenous personnel and organizations. HTSs' logic suggests that by doing so, outside bias is minimized resulting in information that is more accurate and better reflects local perceptions. For example, the SSRA periodically conducts a pair of attitudinal surveys regarding national identity and tribal affiliation at the national, provincial, and district levels.[171] Aggregated results are then shared across the area of operations, providing important insights to staffs and HTTs operating in those locations. Co-located with the Theater Coordination Element (TCE), the primary focus of the SSRA is the collection of operationally relevant empirical data and the development of research plans based on questions submitted by the deployed HTTs, operational planners, and strategic decision makers[172] The SSRA team then provides an analysis of the data before passing it on to the HTTs as well as back to the reachback research center (RRC). For example, The Theater Coordination Element (TCE) is a theater asset

[169]Lamb et al., *Human Terrain Teams: An Organizational Innovation for Sociocultural Knowledge in Irregular Warfare*,14.

[170]U.S. Army Human Terrain System, "Social Science Research and Analysis," http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/ssra.html (accessed February 2014), 22.

[171]Clinton et al., *Congressionally Directed Assessment of the Human Terrain System*, 20.

[172]Ron Diana and John Roscoe, "The Afghanistan TCE and TSO: Administrative and Logistical Support to HTS Teams and Knowledge Management of HTS Information," *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin* (October-December 2011): 21.

embedded within a "three star" headquarters.[173] Made up of 11-16 HTS personnel, the TCE provides strategic level social science support, manage HTS projects theater-wide, and coordinate social science research and analysis (SSRA) capability. The TCE also serves as the link to the HTS headquarters in the continental United States (CONUS), providing oversight and management of in-theater administrative and support functions. Currently there is one TCE operating in Afghanistan in support of Headquarters, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).[174] The TCE provides human terrain analysis and research to the ISAF staff, which included social scientists participation in operational planning teams and working groups. Additionally, the TCE disseminates guidance to all HTTs/HTATs in Afghanistan ensuring a "full-research capability" is available to the teams when they require additional not resident at their level.[175] Lastly, the Reachback Research Center (RRC) located at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas provides in-depth analytical support to the TCE, HTTs and HTATs. As the reachback capability for all deployed HTS elements, the RRC has access to a wide body of academic knowledge enabling it to conducts on-demand large-scale research projects and responds to request for research. The RRC has an important role in the HTS concept of operations due its access to additional resources not resident in theater and its ability to interface more easily with other governmental or civilian organizations. The RRC employs a combination of regionally focused,

[173]U.S. Army Human Terrain System, "Theater Coordination Element," http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/tce.html (accessed February 2014).

[174]Clinton et al., *Congressionally Directed Assessment of the Human Terrain System*, 21.

[175]Diana and Roscoe, *The Afghanistan TCE and TSO: Administrative and Logistical Support to HTS Teams and Knowledge Management of HTS Information*, 22.

multi-disciplinary human terrain analyst, social scientists, and contractors all with the explicit purpose of addressing an "array of social behavioral matters."[176]

Presently, TRADOC is seeking to develop HTS into an enduring capability in the U.S. Army, which would represent the Army's commitment to institutionalizing sociocultural support to its forces worldwide. In October 2010, the Army approved a Program Objectives Memorandum (POM) authorization for HTS with a base budget of 18 million dollars for fiscal years 2012-2016.[177] Normally, such approval would represent HTS becoming a permanent Army program of record. However, despite being a step in the right direction, HTS, and many other programs across the Army, are at risk of being defunded or cancelled. Reductions in federal spending due to the Budget Control Act of 2011 coupled with a possible sequestration in two years will force Army leadership to make hard decisions on where to make cutbacks in order to ensure the readiness of the Army operating at reduced budget levels beyond 2015. There are however, indications that the Army is considering the retention of HTS capabilities in the post-OEF environment. In 2011, HTS received a tasking from the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence in regards to developing a concept of operation for pre-conflict (phase

[176]U.S. Army Human Terrain System, "Theater Coordination Element," http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/rrc.html (accessed February 2014).

[177]U.S. Army Human Terrain System, "Theater Coordination Element" http://hts.army.mil/faq.html (accessed February 2014). The POM is a major document in the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution (PPBE) process, and the basis for the component budget estimates. The POM is the principal programming documents that details how a component proposes to respond to assignments in the Defense Planning and Programming Guidance (DPPG) and satisfy its assigned functions over the Future Years Defense Program. The POM shows programmed needs five years into the future, http://www.tradoc.army.mil/FrontPageContent/Docs/TRADOC%20Strategic%20Plan%20booklet%20Final%20Signed%20Version.pdf.

zero) support to combatant commands.[178] HTS was asked to "take a step back and look ahead" in seeing how it could use its capabilities to inform the decisions of combatant commanders and staffs before a conflict occurs, versus the tactical support it has provided over the last seven years[179] As a result, HTS initiated two pilot projects in which it deployed two-man teams to U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) to identify cultural capability gaps and assess methods of providing support to combatant commands.[180] With a goal of supporting long-term planning needs rather than immediate operational requirements, the teams produced reports and other products over a four-month period relying heavily on the Reachback Research Center (RRC).[181] Unfortunately, official results of the pilot program were not available during the writing of this monograph. However, according to Colonel Sharon Hamilton, HTS director from 2010 to 2012, the combatant commands were very receptive to the idea. She went on to say that "the need and validity for sociocultural research and analysis is clear," but future implementation would ultimately come down to "priorities and funding."[182]

[178]Lamb et al., *Human Terrain Teams: An Organizational Innovation for Sociocultural Knowledge in Irregular Warfare*, 80.

[179]Ibid., 81.

[180]Ibid.

[181]Ibid.

[182]Institute For Defense and Government Advancement, "COL Sharon Hamilton on Human Terrain Systems (HTS)" Youtube Video, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tl3rNcbjPJE (accessed 5 March 2014).

Assessment

Several debates are ongoing in reference to the Army's efforts to address its operational gaps in sociocultural knowledge. First, is the ethical argument regarding the use of anthropologists to collect cultural and social data on others in support of military operations. The field of anthropology has a long history of avoiding too close of a relationship with the military in an attempt to remain disassociated from its past misuse in previous wars.[183] Shortly after its development, HTS began to receive considerable media attention and became the target of significant criticism from the American Anthropological Association (AAA). The AAA cited violations of its code of ethics by anthropologists working with the military, and their concern that sociocultural information could be used as intelligence for targeting purposes. In October 2007, the AAA Executive Board issued a statement outlining its assessment and disapproval of HTS deploying anthropologist, maintaining that it viewed the project as an "unacceptable application of anthropological expertise."[184] In spite of this, the Executive Board still concluded

[183]Montgomery McFate, "Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The Strange Story of Their Curious Relationship," *Military Review* (March-April 2005): 24.

[184]American Anthropological Association, American Anthropological Association's Executive Board Statement on the Human Terrain System Project, 31 October, 2007, http://www.aaanet.org/about/Policies/statements/Human-Terrain-System-Statement.cfm (accessed 3 October 2013). According to the AAA Code of Ethics, anthropologists should clearly distinguish themselves from military personnel and identify who they are, what they intend to do and gain "voluntary informed consent" prior to conducting fieldwork. The code of ethics also stipulates the obligation to do no harm to those they study. According to the statement the board believes HTS anthropologists might have conflicting obligations when working for military forces and the information provided could possibly be used for short-term or long-term targeting purposes.

its statement affirming that anthropology could help guide or improve U.S. government policy if kept in the public sphere.[185]

Second, are the arguments for and against the U.S. Army Human Terrain System and its contribution to the tactical and operational successes in Iraq and Afghanistan. There are those in government that argue that the program's multimillion-dollar budget is exceedingly expensive with little evidence to justify the cost. Supporters assert that the analysis and feedback provided by HTTs has successfully filled the gaps in sociocultural understanding of the operational environment and will remain viable in the future.[186] Still others have argued that "there [was] no valid, systemic requirement for nonorganic personnel or equipment," because the Army and Marine Corps already possessed foreign area officers and civil affairs officers capable of contributing to the understanding of the local populations.[187] With regard to HTT effectiveness, units in Iraq or Afghanistan have reported varying degrees of experience since the organization became operational in 2007. Secretary of the Army John McHugh wrote in a letter to Congress stating that HTS has been a "very successful program" having received steady praise from commanders of combat units in Iraq and Afghanistan, each indicating the significant benefit of HTS to their operations.[188] The Stability Operations Lessons Learned and Information

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[185]Ibid.

[186]Clinton et al., *Congressionally Directed Assessment of the Human Terrain System*, 2.

[187]MAJ Ben Connable, "All Our Eggs in a Broken Basket: How the Human Terrain System is Undermining Sustainable Military Cultural Competence," *Military Review* (March-April 2009): 57-64.

[188]John McHugh, "Letter to the Honorable Duncan Hunter, U.S. House of Representatives," 15 March 2013, http://cryptome.org/2013/03/hts-army-hunter.pdf (accessed

Management System (SOLLIMS) lists several comments concerning HTSs' effectiveness, the following statement reflects the common theme throughout:

> Human Terrain Teams offered commanders & staffs "non-military" perspectives on issues discussed during decisionmaking [and] planning processes. Civilian social scientists were often able to bring a level of objectivity and an out-of-the box perspective that promoted an increased understanding of the situation and helped identify more effective courses of action.[189]

Conversely, others such as former battalion commander COL Gian Gentile, believe the effectiveness of Human Terrain Teams are "dubious at best," citing instances in which team members, possessed graduate or doctoral degrees in anthropology but did not have detailed knowledge of Iraq or Afghanistan. He went on to state that HTS "still would not have made any kind of significant difference in the outcome of these wars [Iraq and Afghanistan]…what mattered most were the strategic, political, and social contexts in which these wars were fought."[190] Nevertheless, it was not uncommon for HTS to receive variable judgments of performance from the field.[191] Each of the studies commissioned within the past five years consistently listed the same findings; some brigade commanders gave positive feedback, while

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November 2013). Sent in response to Representative Hunter's concerns about the cost and effectiveness of HTS.

[189]U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, "Leadership in Stability Operations: Understanding and Engaging the People," *SOLLIMS Sampler* 4 (2 April 2013):18.

[190]Gian Gentile, "Counterinsurgency: The Graduate Level of War or Pure Hukum?" *Small Wars Journal* (3 August 2013), http://www.e-ir.info/2013/08/03/counterinsurgency-the-graduate-level-of-war-or-pure-hokum/ (accessed March 2014).

[191]Lamb et al., *Human Terrain Teams: An Organizational Innovation for Sociocultural Knowledge in Irregular Warfare*, 169.

others were negative.[192] An Institute for Defense Analysis study concluded that the HTTs effectiveness strongly depended on its ability to successfully integrate with the supported command.[193] Not surprisingly, some commanders' based their perceptions of the HTTs, and their willingness to use them appropriately, on previous experiences that may have been tainted due to growing pains and challenges HTS suffered during its formative years. At the time of its development, the pace of combat operations and the demand for the capability caused the Army to have to work out many of the HTS program's administrative details while simultaneously building a sociocultural capability for deployed units. It was not a perfect process, TRADOC later took steps to increase oversight and improve HTT personnel selection in order to enhance the effectiveness of the HTTs.[194]

In summary, the HTTs brought about positive results in units operating in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Army again demonstrated its ability to innovate and leverage capabilities not resident in the military. In this case, an entire span of social science research and analysis expertise was acquired to inform decisions, and further develop the commanders understanding of the operational environment, a critical requirement for success in counterinsurgency.

CONCLUSIONS

Future Operating Environment

> The biggest danger facing today's military is not terrorism, global instability, or the proliferation of weapons. It is the danger of our ignorance if we let history repeat

[192]Clinton et al., *Congressionally Directed Assessment of the Human Terrain System*, 60.

[193]Lamb et al., *Human Terrain Teams: An Organizational Innovation for Sociocultural Knowledge in Irregular Warfare*, 174.

[194]John McHugh, Letter to the Honorable Duncan Hunter, 15 March, 2013.

> itself. In our zeal to quickly cut federal spending we have accepted an increased level of risk to our national security.
>
> —General Gordon Sullivan, USA (Ret), *Defense One News Article*[195]

Two common themes are prevalent across recent U.S. strategic documents and statements by Cabinet and military leaders regarding the future global security environment; the future will be characterized by uncertainty, and the world is growing increasingly complex. Collectively, these and other conditions essentially guarantee the U.S. military will face a wide range of threats and opportunities in the years to come.[196] As the war in Afghanistan winds down and DOD reprioritizes its strategic focus, the U.S. Army will transition from a force primarily executing combat operations in Afghanistan, to building partner capacity with allies, and shaping the security environment in extremely diverse regions.[197] The recently published 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) builds on the priorities articulated in the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance, and offers added insight into the United States military strategy over the next ten to twenty years. The updated approach now includes three pillars that broadly represent the key priorities for DOD: protecting the homeland against all threats and natural disasters; building security globally; and projecting power in order to win decisively.[198] General Martin Dempsey,

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[195] Heed the Historical Warnings of Post-War Budget Cuts." Defense One. April 4, 2014, http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2014/04/heed-historical-warnings-post-war-budget-cuts/81943/ (accessed April 1, 2014.)

[196]Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, January 2012), 3.

[197]U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Strategic Planning Guidance* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013), 3.

[198]Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2014), v.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, posited that the core theme of the QDR is "one of rebalance," stressing the need for the U.S. military to "restore its readiness for the full spectrum of potential conflict" by taking a hard look at existing capabilities and commitments, while simultaneously balancing its global presence with fewer resources.[199] As a result, future Army forces will need to strengthen relationships with joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational partners in order to take a more integrated approach to responding to the global challenges ahead.[200]

A vital aspect of the U.S. policy governing the change in military strategy is the U.S. "pivot" or "rebalance" to the Asia-Pacific region. Fundamentally, this shift continues the realignment of American national power towards Asia, with the goal of advancing U.S. interests and promoting peace and stability as it becomes increasingly important for the world economy. Furthermore, the region faces significant security challenges such as competition over energy resources, maritime and territorial disputes, and tensions surrounding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the rising influence of China, all of which could negatively affect American and its partner's interests.[201] However, it is important to note that the U.S. military strategy in Asia is not to prepare for a conflict with China. As stated in a 2012 independent assessment of U.S. force posture in the Asia-Pacific region, the aim is to "shape the environment

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[199]Ibid., 59.

[200]U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, *U.S. Army Functional Concept for Engagement* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 24 February 2014), 9.

[201]Mark E. Maniyin et al., *Pivot to the Pacific? The Obama Administration's "Rebalancing" Toward Asia* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 28 March 2012), 4.

so that such a conflict is never necessary and perhaps someday inconceivable."[202] Described as the "engine that drives the global economy," the Asia-Pacific is one of the most culturally, socially, and economically diverse regions in the world.[203] Comprised of thirty-six nations, with more than half of the world's population, it also includes a variety of ethnic groups and cultures with approximately three thousand different languages spoken throughout.[204] Because of these facts, it is incredibly obvious that U.S. forces engaged in this region would still benefit from a capability that enables sociocultural understanding across the environment.

Regionally Aligned Forces

DOD has begun to move forward with implementing the president's guidance to "make our presence and mission in the Asia Pacific a top priority," as well as broadening the distribution of forces globally.[205] The U.S. Army in particular, still charged with maintaining commitments to partners in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia, is transitioning from a force focused on COIN

[202]David J. Berteau, et al., *US Force Posture Strategy in the Asia Pacific Region: An Independent Assessment* (Washington DC: Center For Strategic and International Studies 2012), http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA563866 (accessed 25 March 2014).

[203]Samuel J. Locklear, III, "A Combatant Commander's View on the Asia-Pacific Rebalance: The Patch-Work Quilt," Speech given to USPACOM, 6 December 2012. http://www.pacom.mil/commander/06_dec_12-asia--pacific-rebalance.shtml (accessed 17 April 2014).

[204]Ibid.

[205]Texts of remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament, 17 November 2011, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament, (accessed 1 March, 2014).

operations to one that is more operationally adaptable.[206] In order for the Army to maintain its ability to deliver strategic landpower in multiple environments, it will have to develop a culturally competent force, as well as adapt existing capabilities and force structures to accomplish its objectives outlined in the 2013 Army Strategic Planning Guidance. The Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) concept is the primary means it will use to leverage ground force capabilities against future combatant command requirements. Regionally aligned forces are described as Army units that are assigned and allocated to combatant commands, as well as units the Army retains control of but identifies to the combatant commands for planning of regional missions.[207] The logic behind the RAF concept is about providing commanders of combatant commands and Army Service Component Commands with regionally aligned and specially trained forces that are competent in languages, cultures, history, and threats in areas where conflict is likely.[208]Once available, these forces are able to support operational missions, military exercises, and theater security cooperation activities in their assigned regions, building habitual relationships that the commander may be able to capitalize on later. The HTS capability along with the Army's language and cultural training programs are well suited for supporting RAF. At the tactical level, regional and language training can continue to prepare U.S. Army forces for work in specific theaters and allow them to better understand their operating environment. At the operational and

[206]Raymond T. Odierno, and John M. McHugh, "Army Strategic Planning Guidance 2013," *U.S. Army Stand-To* (7 February 2013), http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/rv5_ downloads/info/references/army_strategic_planning_guidance.pdf. (accessed 26 October 2013).

[207]Ibid., 5-6.

[208] U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, *U.S. Army Operating Concept* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 19 August 2010), 25.

theater levels, HTS could provide important sociocultural research and advice to planners for any number of military activities without having to attach HTTs to combat forces. As stated earlier, the Army has already introduced several pilot programs testing the validity of sociocultural support to combatant commands and country teams, which would naturally support regionally aligned units as well. Whatever the case, the Army must not depart from or forget what it has learned as it diverts its attention to future challenges. Instead, it should transition its sociocultural knowledge capacity to one that is capable of supporting the force in both peacetime and war.

Conclusion

There is a growing sense that the future of HTS and other programs that provide sociocultural understanding is at a crossroads. On one hand, military leaders have grown to appreciate the critical role it has played in filling capability gaps for military forces, having recognized the value social science perspectives add to understanding the operational environment and the decisionmaking process. On the other hand, some perceive HTS as a niche capability, developed for recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, that will have little of no value in operations elsewhere.[209] On the contrary, a social science based organization can support the force over the entire spectrum of conflict. Sociocultural knowledge adds value to the military decisionmaking process and plays a key role in understanding the impacts of military operations.[210] The question now is how does the army improve its capability, refine its methods,

[209]House Committee on Armed Services, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014*, 113th Cong., 1st sess., 2013, 231, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CRPT-113hrpt102/pdf/CRPT-113hrpt102.pdf. (accessed 1 March 2014).

[210]Michael Flynn et al., "Operational Relevance of Behavioral & Social Science to DoD Missions," Report (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013), 13.

and leverage new technologies and force structures to understand the human terrain in the future. Without a doubt, HTS, the Army's primary social science-based research and analysis capability will have to adapt to meet the needs of the ever-evolving Army and changing environment. However, given the present fiscal environment, it is unlikely that the Army will expand HTS and it very well may not have to be. One thing is certain; understanding the human dimension of conflict is critical to Army mission success. Whether the Army has truly learned the lessons of its past, some of which have been discussed in this paper, remains to be seen. Will it commit to retaining and adapting its sociocultural knowledge capacity in the midst of fiscal uncertainty and the transition out of America's longest war? Or will the Army succumb to its own traditional inclinations to marginalize the capability in pursuit of other priorities. Perhaps, only time will tell.

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